Drowning Love

1

George Asakura

Drowning Love

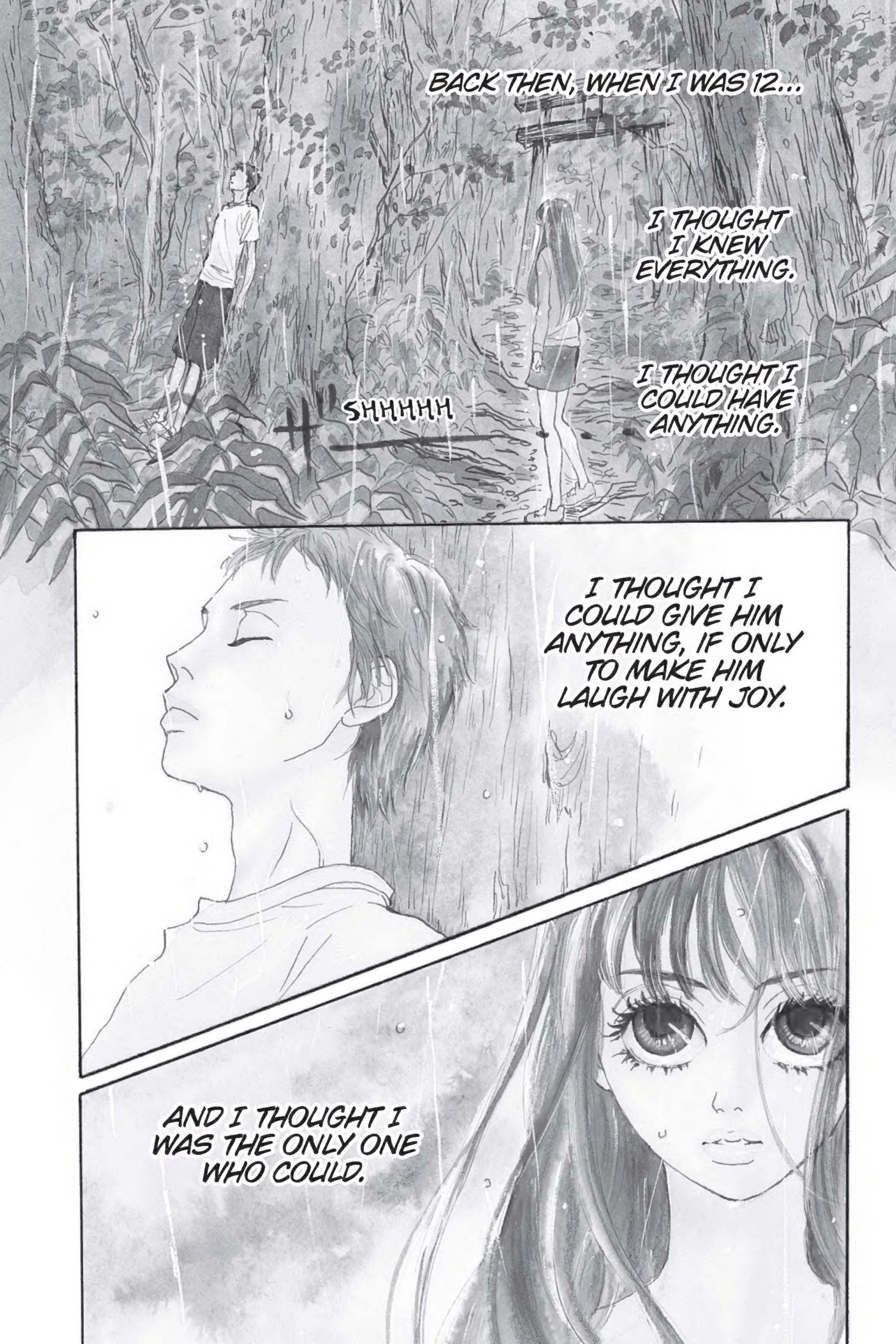
Drowning Love

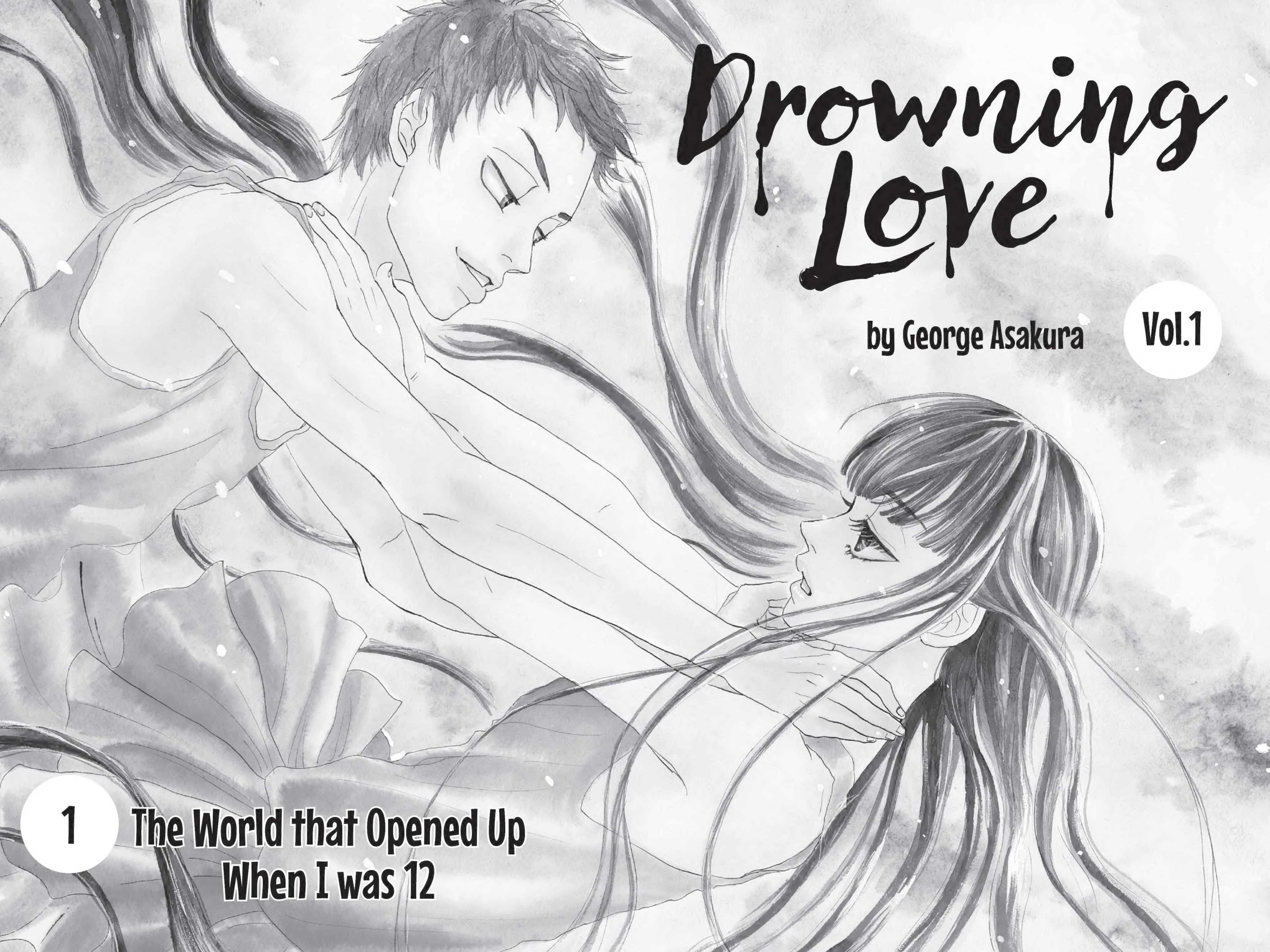
1 The World that Opened Up When I was 12 .... p3

3 Bonds p109

2 Gravity p65

4 Impatience p149


BACK THEN, WHEN I WAS 12...
I THOUGHT I KNEW EVERYTHING.
I THOUGHT I COULD HAVE ANYTHING.
SHHHHH
I THOUGHT I COULD GIVE HIM ANYTHING, IF ONLY TO MAKE HIM LAUGH WITH JOY.
AND I THOUGHT I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD.



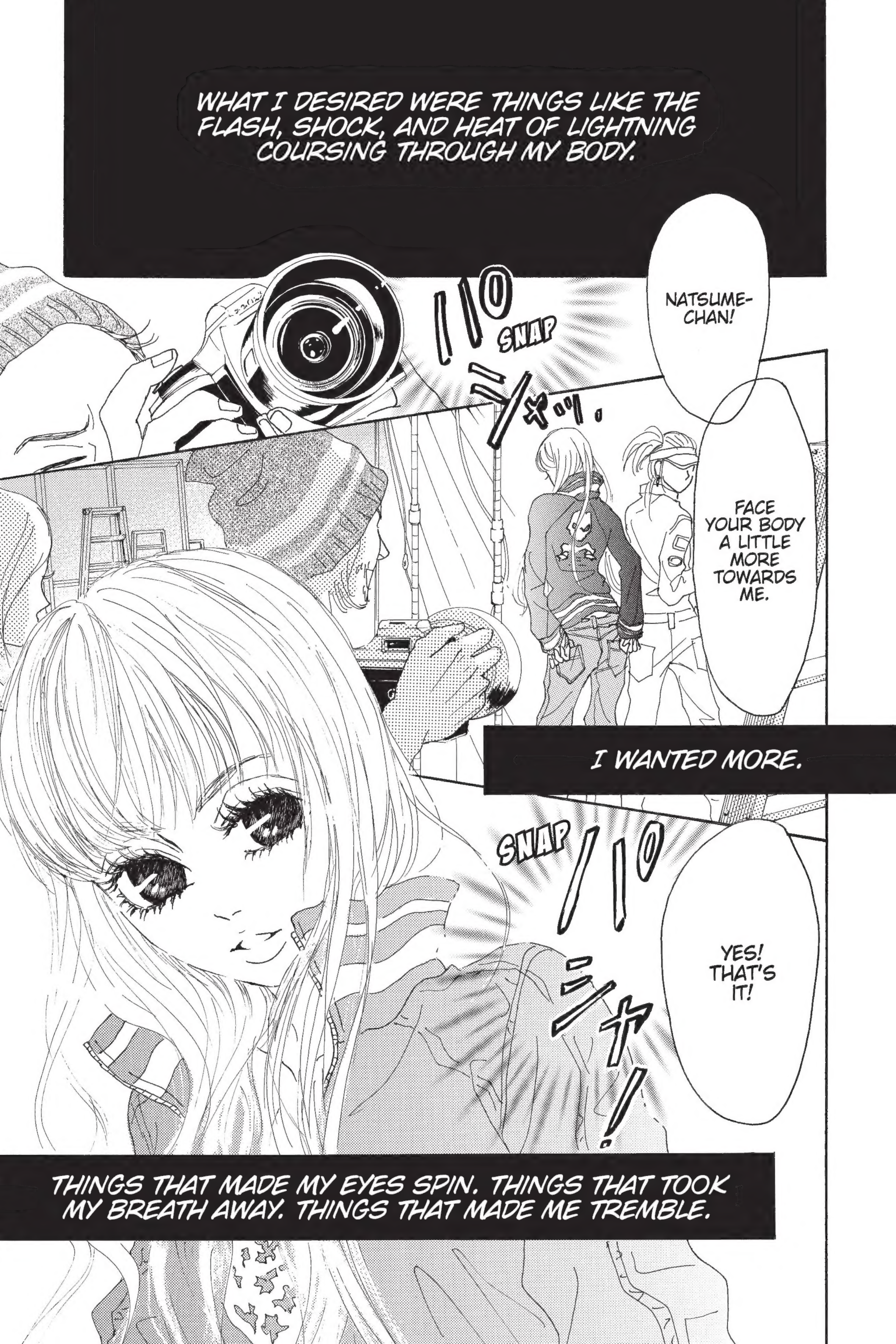
Drowning Love

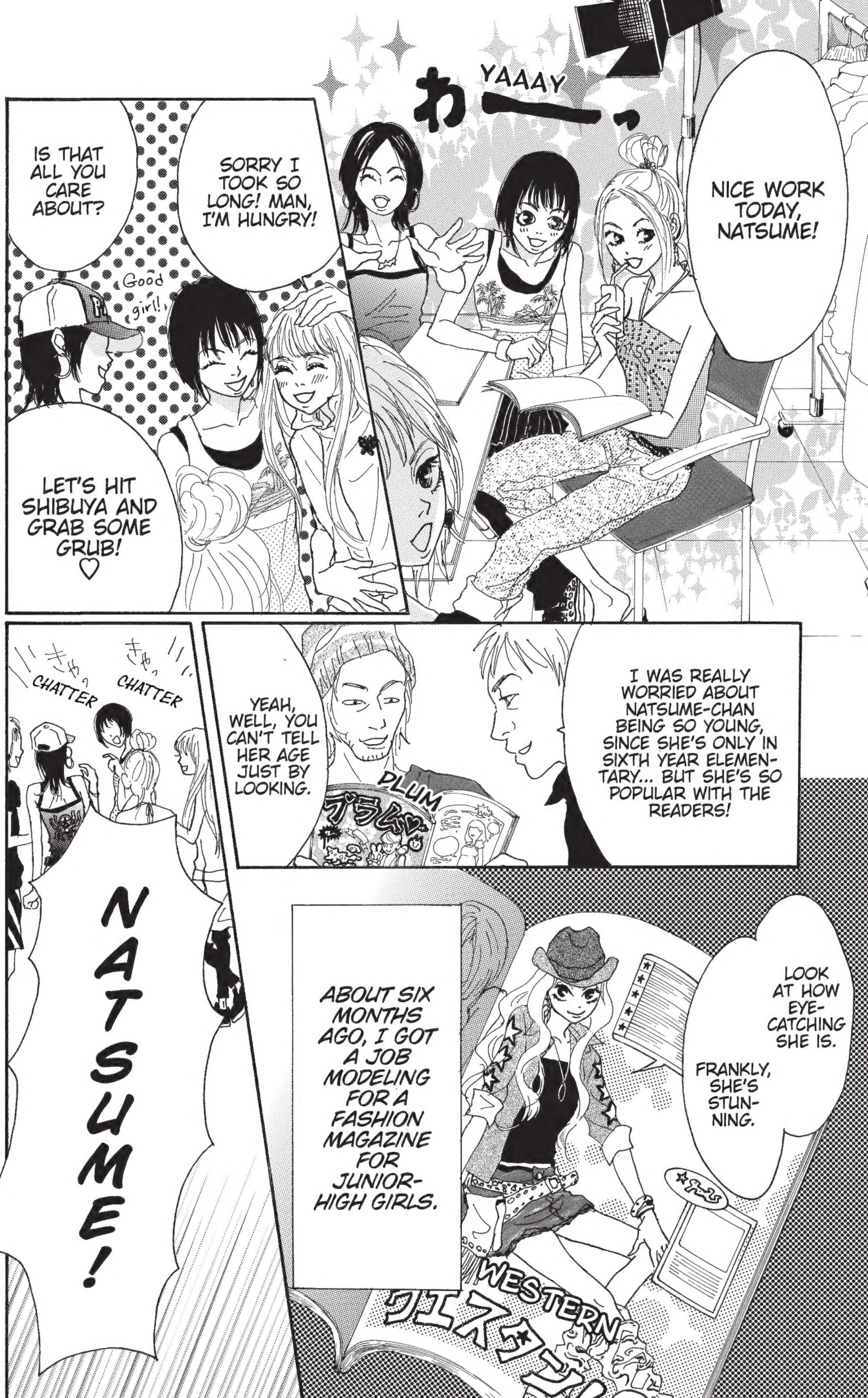
by George Asakura

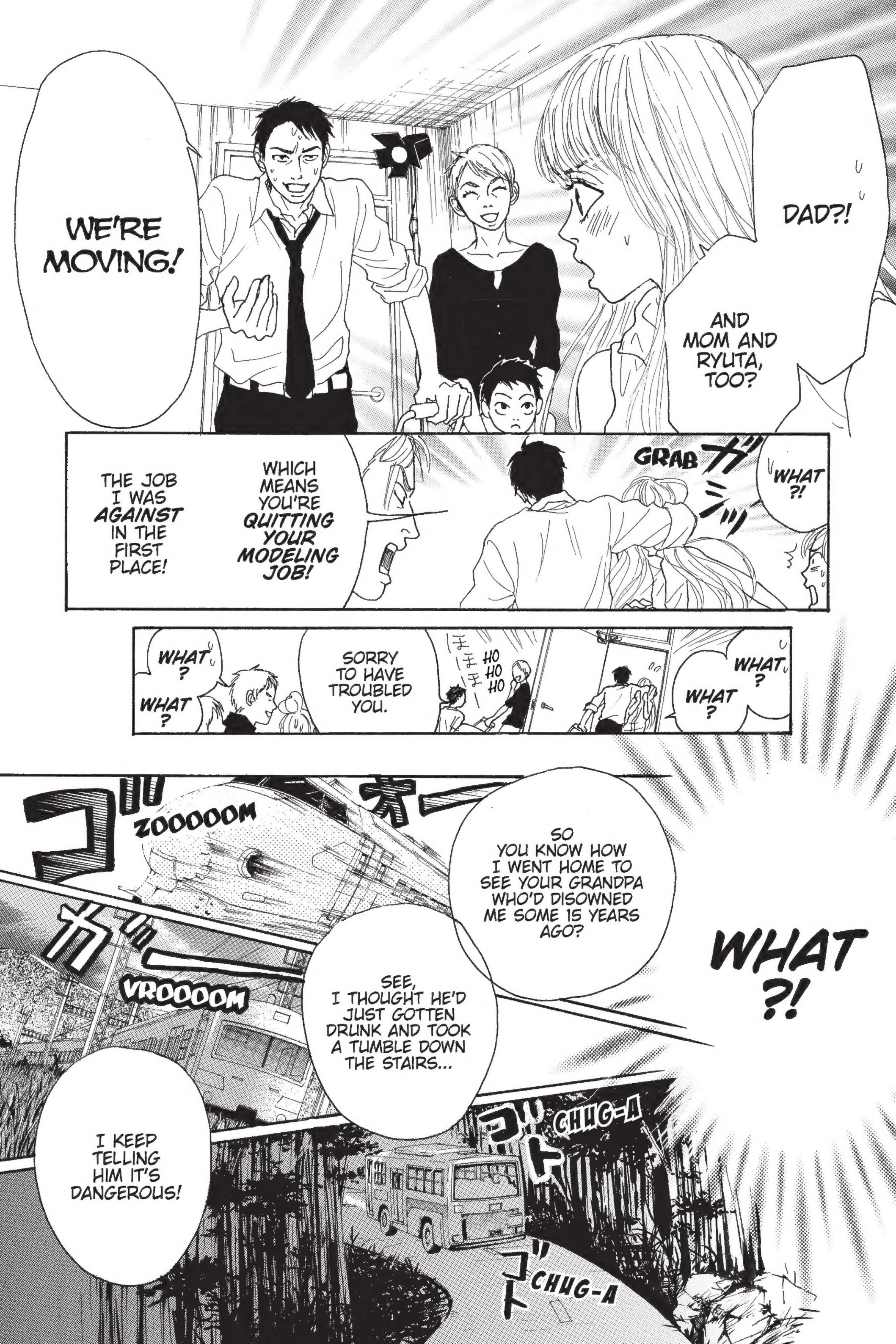
Vol.1

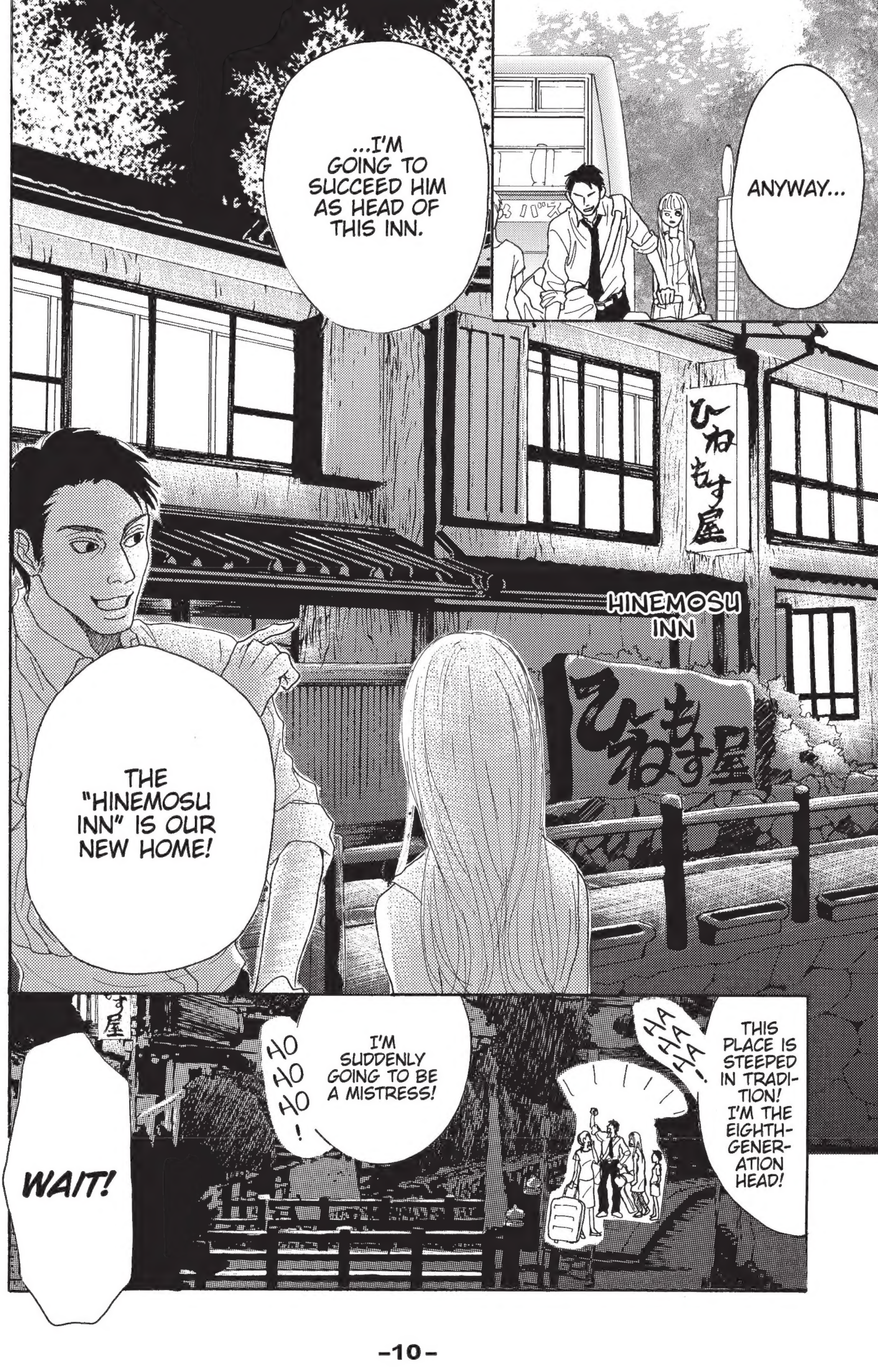
1

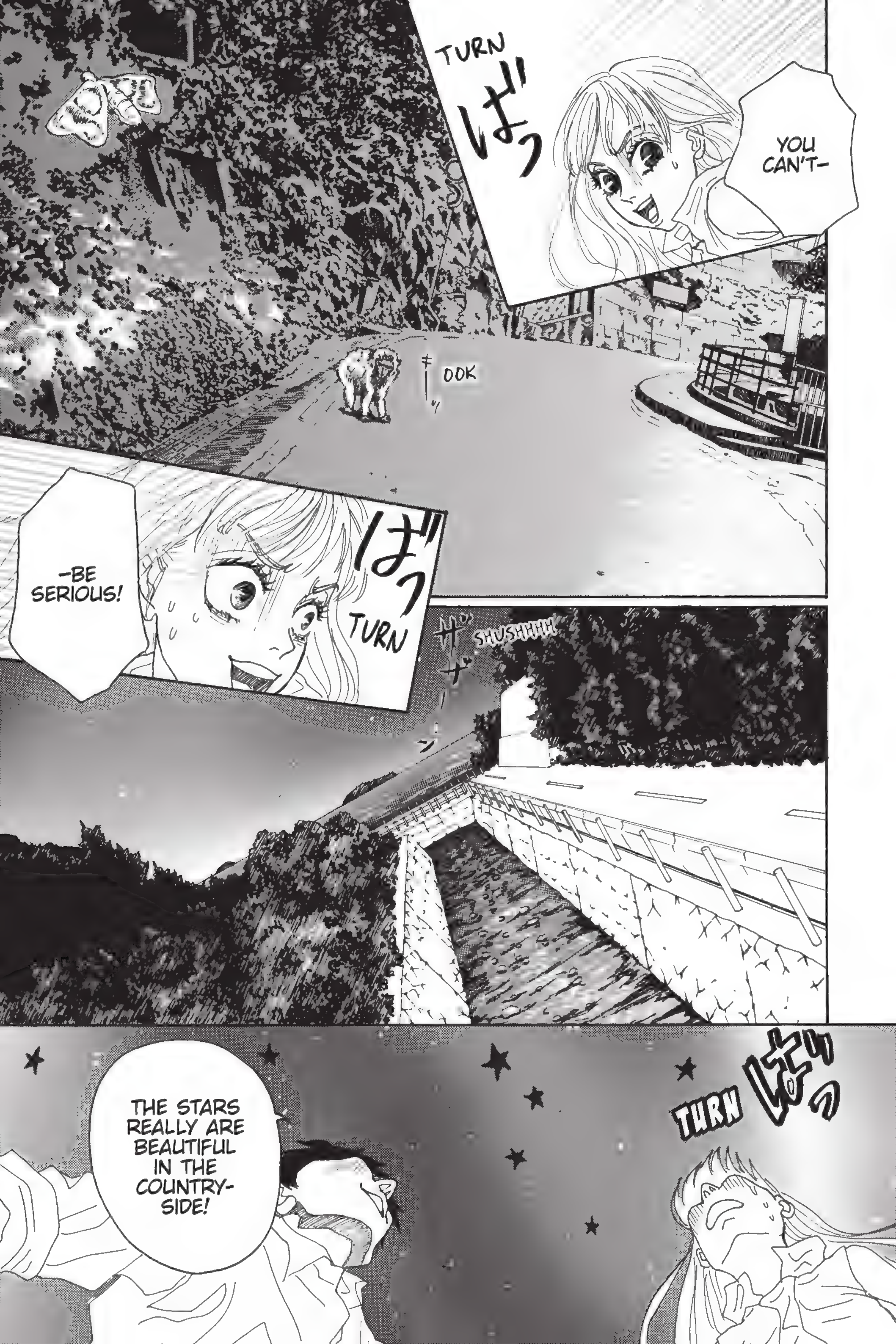
The World that Opened Up When I was 12

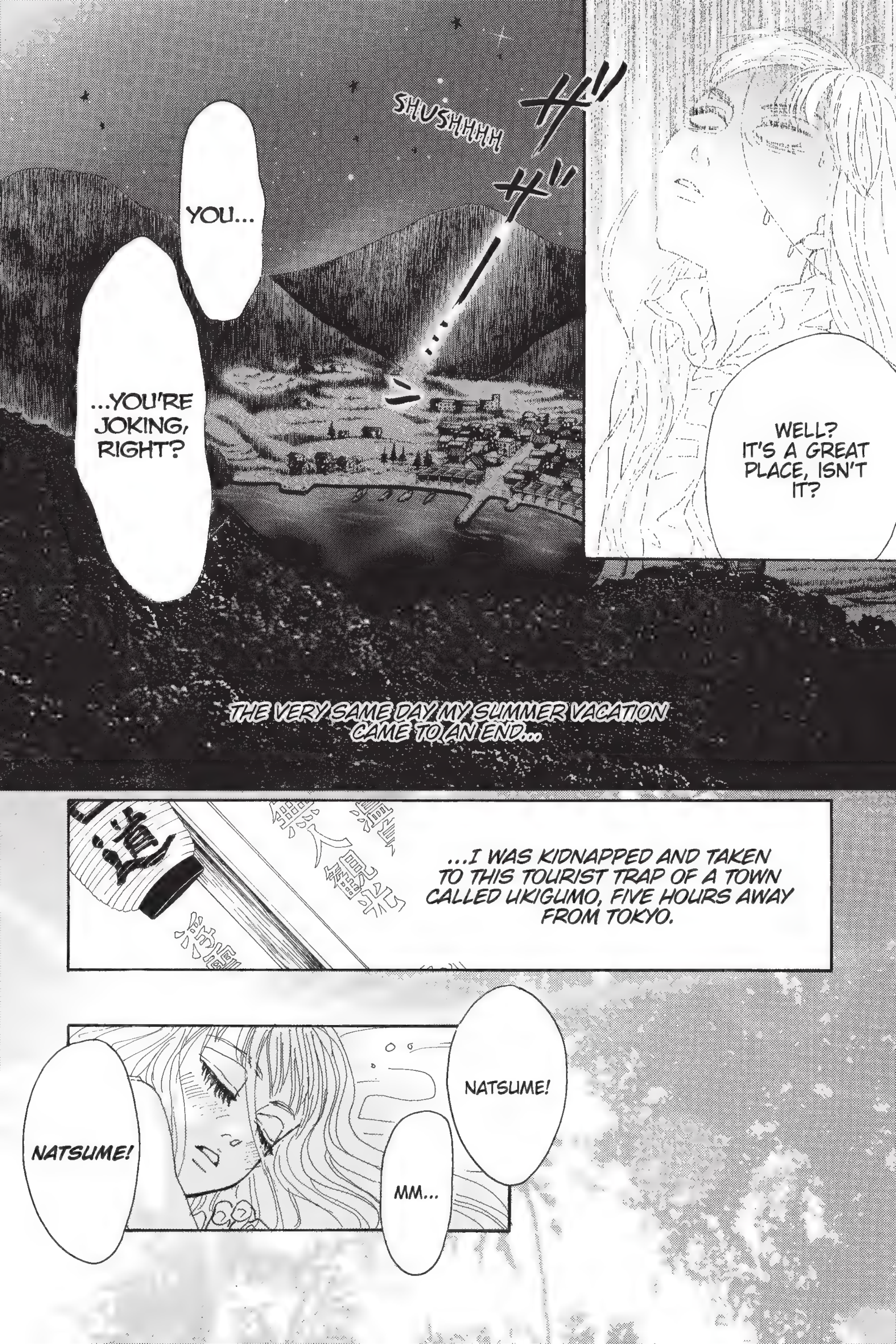

WHAT I DESIRED WERE THINGS LIKE THE FLASH, SHOCK, AND HEAT OF LIGHTNING COURSING THROUGH MY BODY.
NATSUME-CHAN!
SNAP
FACE YOUR BODY A LITTLE MORE TOWARDS ME.
I WANTED MORE.
YES! THAT'S IT!
SNAP
THINGS THAT MADE MY EYES SPIN. THINGS THAT TOOK MY BREATH AWAY. THINGS THAT MADE ME TREMBLE.

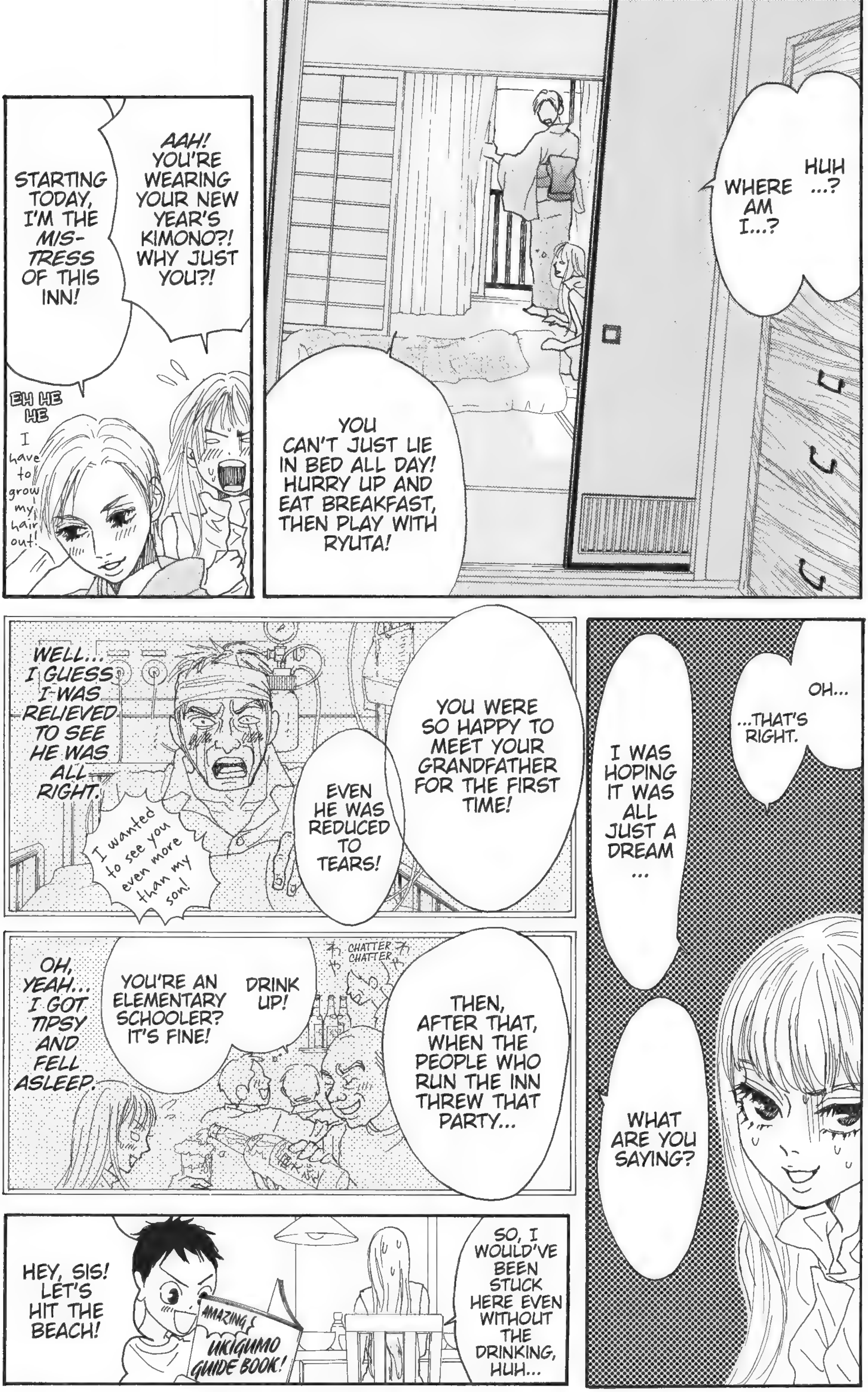

わー っ
YAAAY
NICE WORK TODAY, NATSUME!
SORRY I TOOK SO LONG! MAN, I'M HUNGRY!
IS THAT ALL YOU CARE ABOUT?
Good girl!
LET'S HIT SHIBUYA AND GRAB SOME GRUB! ♡
I WAS REALLY WORRIED ABOUT NATSUME-CHAN BEING SO YOUNG, SINCE SHE'S ONLY IN SIXTH YEAR ELEMENTARY... BUT SHE'S SO POPULAR WITH THE READERS!
YEAH, WELL, YOU CAN'T TELL HER AGE JUST BY LOOKING.
プラム♡
PLUM
きゃっ
CHATTER
きゃっ
CHATTER
LOOK AT HOW EYE-CATCHING SHE IS.
FRANKLY, SHE'S STUNNING.
ABOUT SIX MONTHS AGO, I GOT A JOB MODELING FOR A FASHION MAGAZINE FOR JUNIOR-HIGH GIRLS.
NATSUME!
ウエスタン
WESTERN

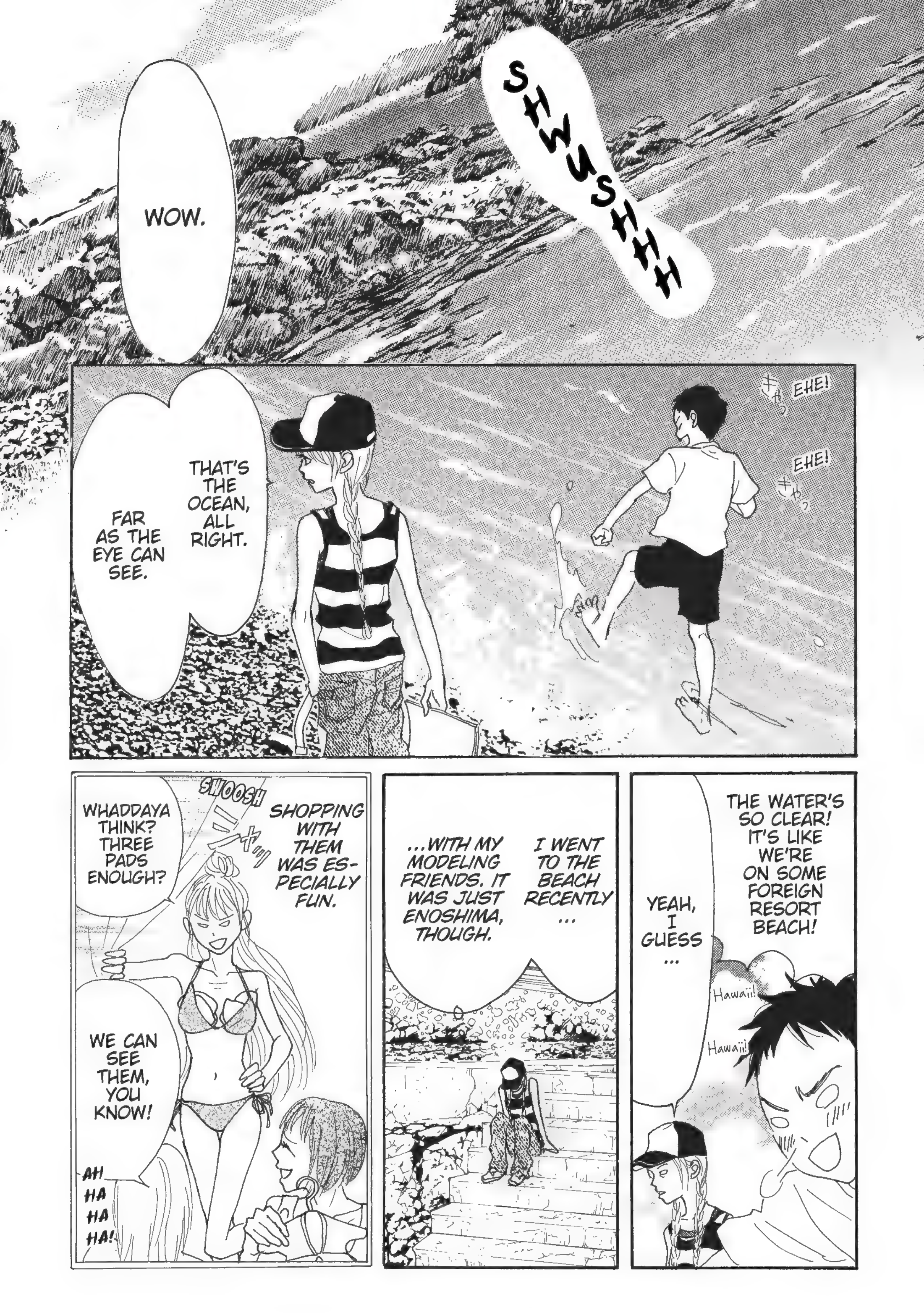

DAD?!
AND MOM AND RYUTA, TOO?
WE'RE MOVING!
WHAT?!
GRAB ガシッ
WHICH MEANS YOU'RE *QUITTING YOUR MODELING JOB!*
THE JOB I WAS *AGAINST* IN THE FIRST PLACE!
WHAT? WHAT?
ほほほー HO HO HO
SORRY TO HAVE TROUBLED YOU.
WHAT? WHAT?
WHAT?!
SO YOU KNOW HOW I WENT HOME TO SEE YOUR GRANDPA WHO'D DISOWNED ME SOME 15 YEARS AGO?
ゴォー ZOOOOOM
ガー VROOOOOM
SEE, I THOUGHT HE'D JUST GOTTEN DRUNK AND TOOK A TUMBLE DOWN THE STAIRS...
I KEEP TELLING HIM IT'S DANGEROUS!
ゴトッ CHUG-A
ゴトッ CHUG-A

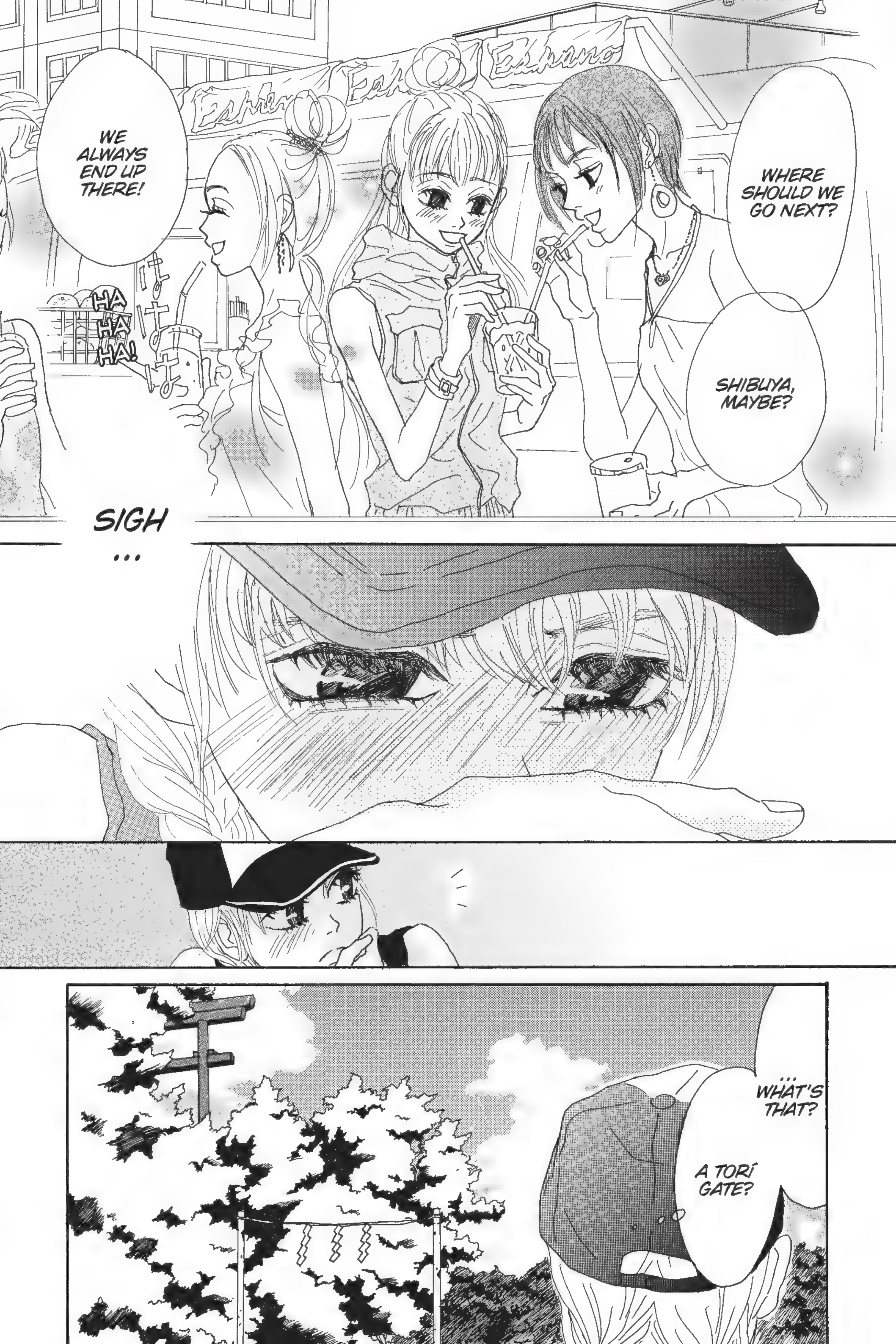

ANYWAY...
...I'M GOING TO SUCCEED HIM AS HEAD OF THIS INN.
ひねもす屋
HINEMOSU INN
THE "HINEMOSU INN" IS OUR NEW HOME!
ひねもす屋
HA HA HA!
THIS PLACE IS STEEPED IN TRADITION! I'M THE EIGHTH-GENERATION HEAD!
HO HO HO!
I'M SUDDENLY GOING TO BE A MISTRESS!
WAIT!

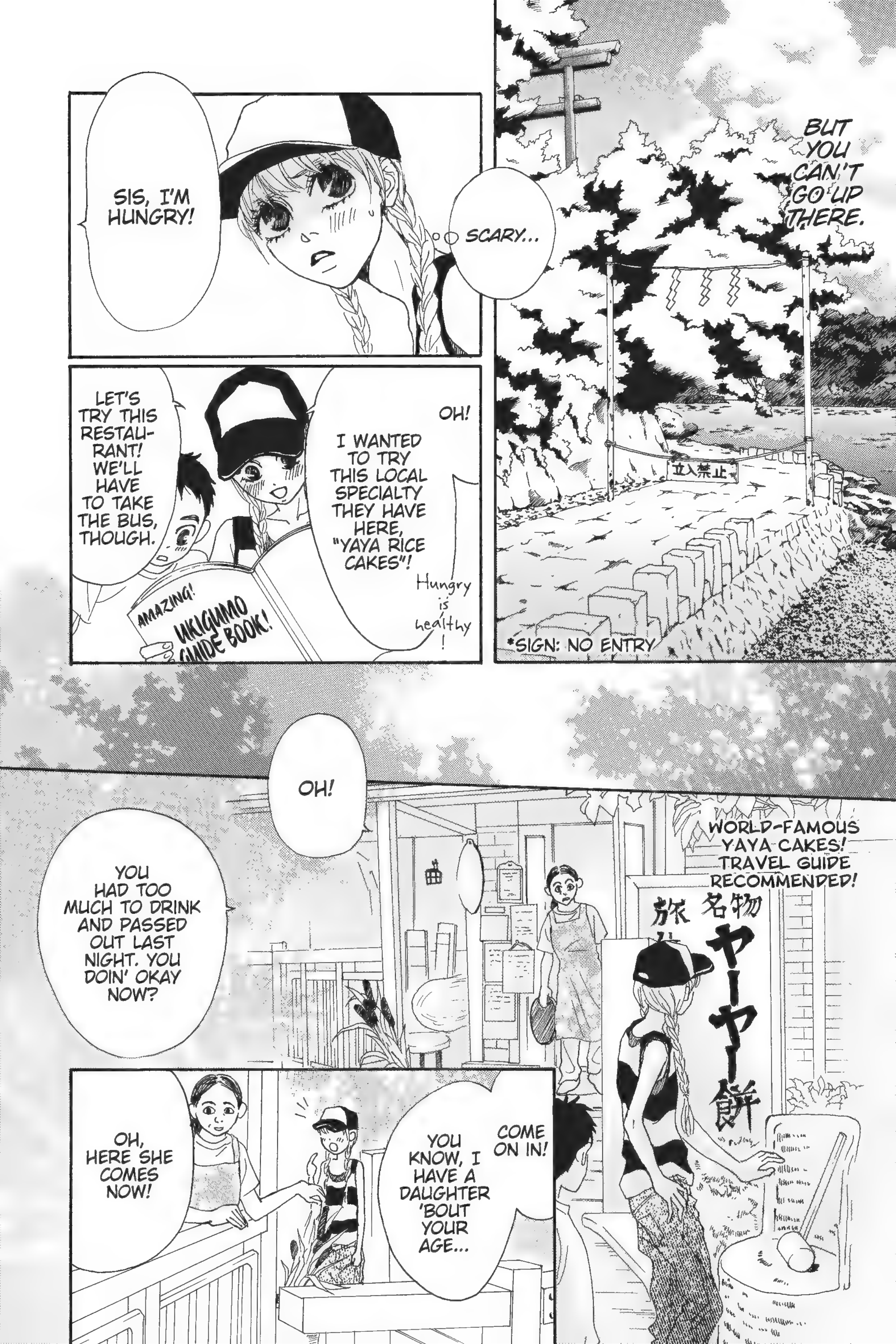

TURN
ばっ
YOU CAN'T-
OOK
ばっ
TURN
-BE SERIOUS!
ザ
ザ
SHUSHHHH
TURN
ばっ
THE STARS REALLY ARE BEAUTIFUL IN THE COUNTRYSIDE!

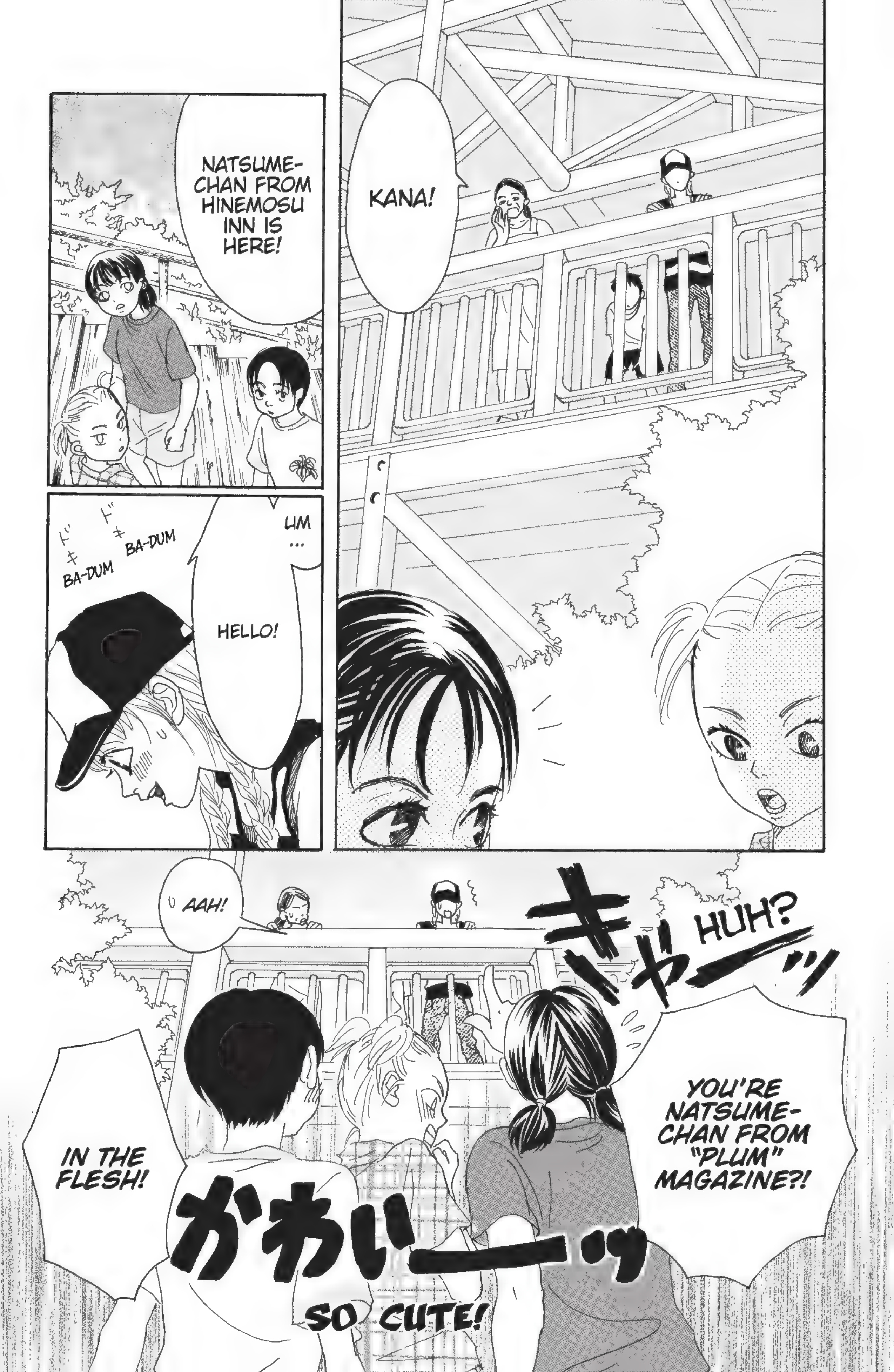

WELL? IT'S A GREAT PLACE, ISN'T IT?
ザ
ザ
SHUSHHHH
YOU...
...YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?
THE VERY SAME DAY MY SUMMER VACATION CAME TO AN END...
...I WAS KIDNAPPED AND TAKEN TO THIS TOURIST TRAP OF A TOWN CALLED UKIGUMO, FIVE HOURS AWAY FROM TOKYO.
NATSUME!
MM...
NATSUME!

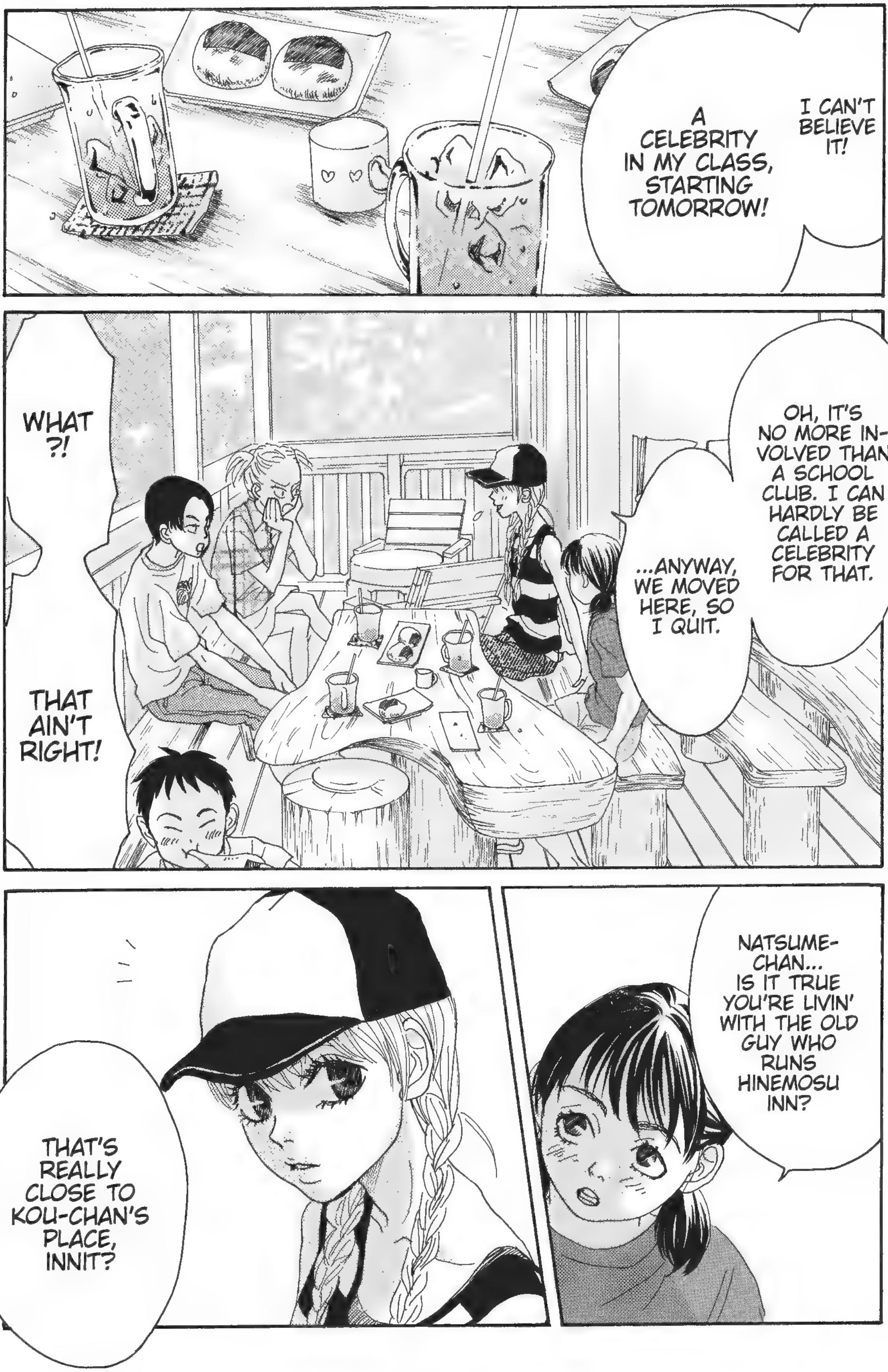

HUH ...?
WHERE AM I...?
YOU CAN'T JUST LIE IN BED ALL DAY! HURRY UP AND EAT BREAKFAST, THEN PLAY WITH RYUTA!
AAH! YOU'RE WEARING YOUR NEW YEAR'S KIMONO?! WHY JUST YOU?!
STARTING TODAY, I'M THE *MISTRESS* OF THIS INN!
EH HE HE
I have to grow my hair out!
OH...
...THAT'S RIGHT.
I WAS HOPING IT WAS ALL JUST A DREAM...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
YOU WERE SO HAPPY TO MEET YOUR GRANDFATHER FOR THE FIRST TIME!
EVEN HE WAS REDUCED TO TEARS!
I wanted to see you even more than my son!
WELL... I GUESS I WAS RELIEVED TO SEE HE WAS ALL RIGHT.
THEN, AFTER THAT, WHEN THE PEOPLE WHO RUN THE INN THREW THAT PARTY...
CHATTER CHATTER
DRINK UP!
YOU'RE AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLER? IT'S FINE!
OH, YEAH... I GOT TIPSY AND FELL ASLEEP.
SO, I WOULD'VE BEEN STUCK HERE EVEN WITHOUT THE DRINKING, HUH...
HEY, SIS! LET'S HIT THE BEACH!
AMAZING UKIGUMO GUIDE BOOK!

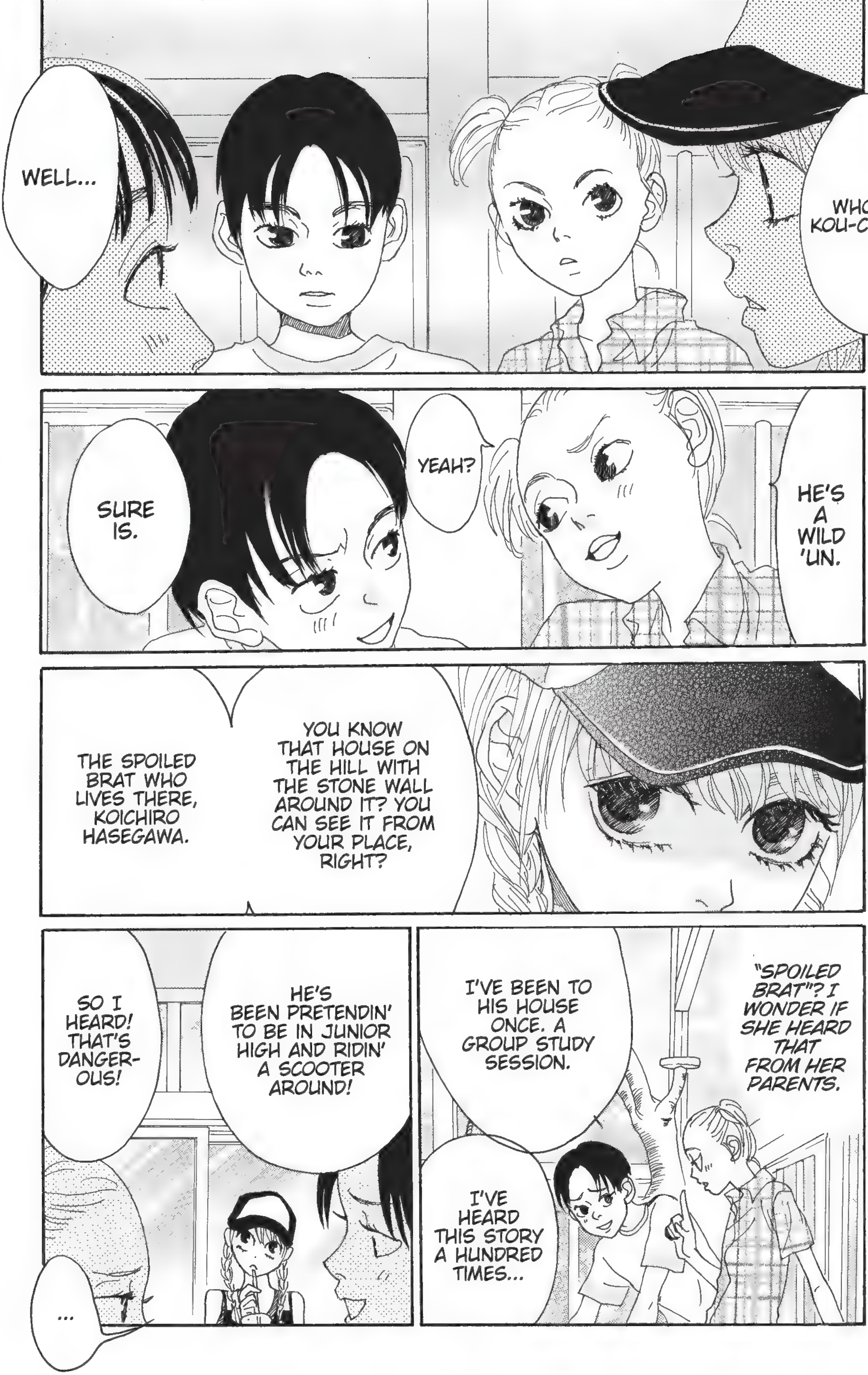

SHWUSHHH
WOW.
きゃっ EHE!
きゃっ EHE!
THAT'S THE OCEAN, ALL RIGHT.
FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE.
THE WATER'S SO CLEAR! IT'S LIKE WE'RE ON SOME FOREIGN RESORT BEACH!
YEAH, I GUESS...
Hawaii!
Hawaii!
I WENT TO THE BEACH RECENTLY...
...WITH MY MODELING FRIENDS. IT WAS JUST ENOSHIMA, THOUGH.
SHOPPING WITH THEM WAS ESPECIALLY FUN.
SWOOSH
WHADDAYA THINK? THREE PADS ENOUGH?
WE CAN SEE THEM, YOU KNOW!
AH HA HA HA!

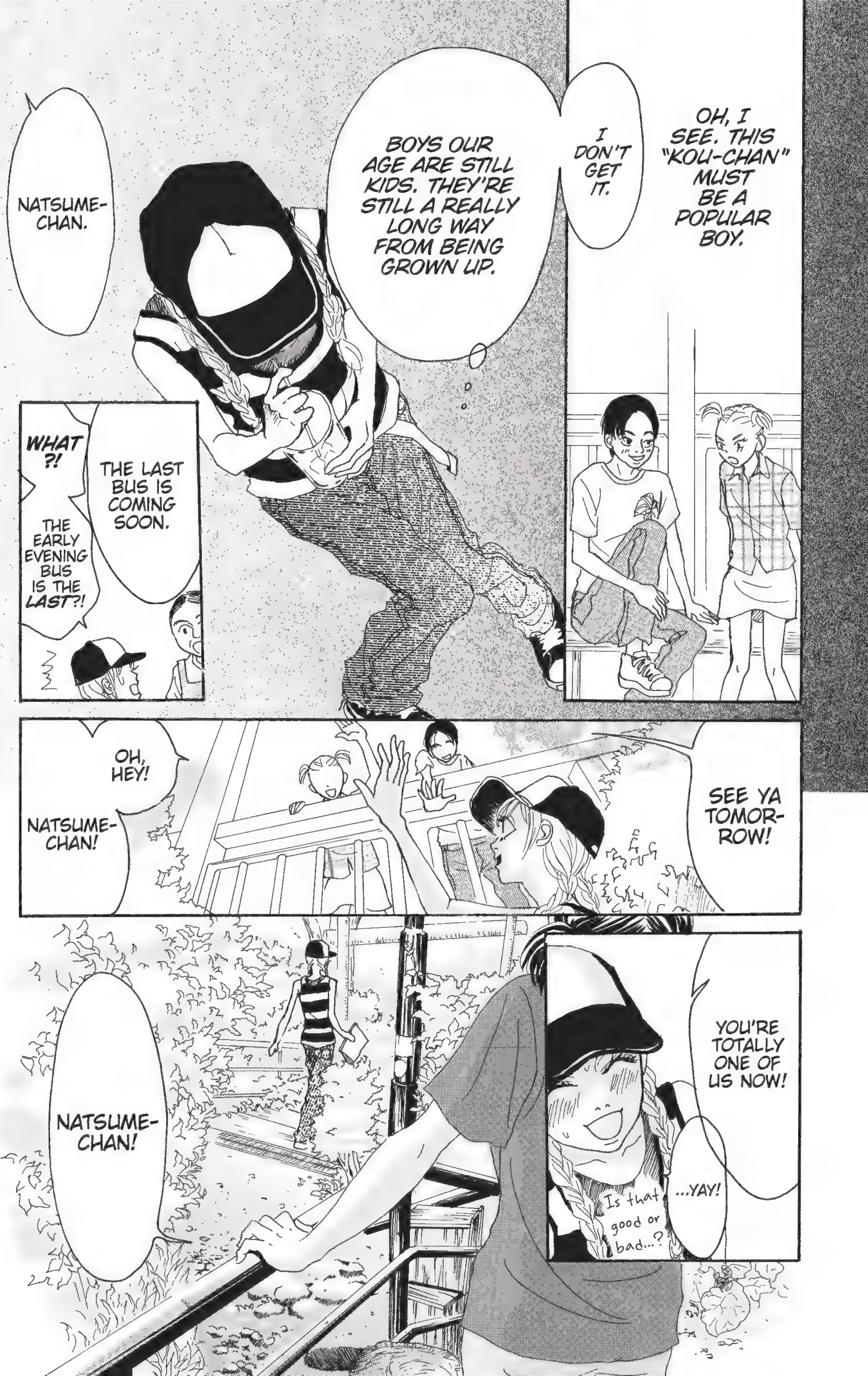

WHERE SHOULD WE GO NEXT?
SHIBUYA, MAYBE?
WE ALWAYS END UP THERE!
ははっはっ
HA HA HA!
SIGH ...
WHAT'S THAT?
A TORI GATE?

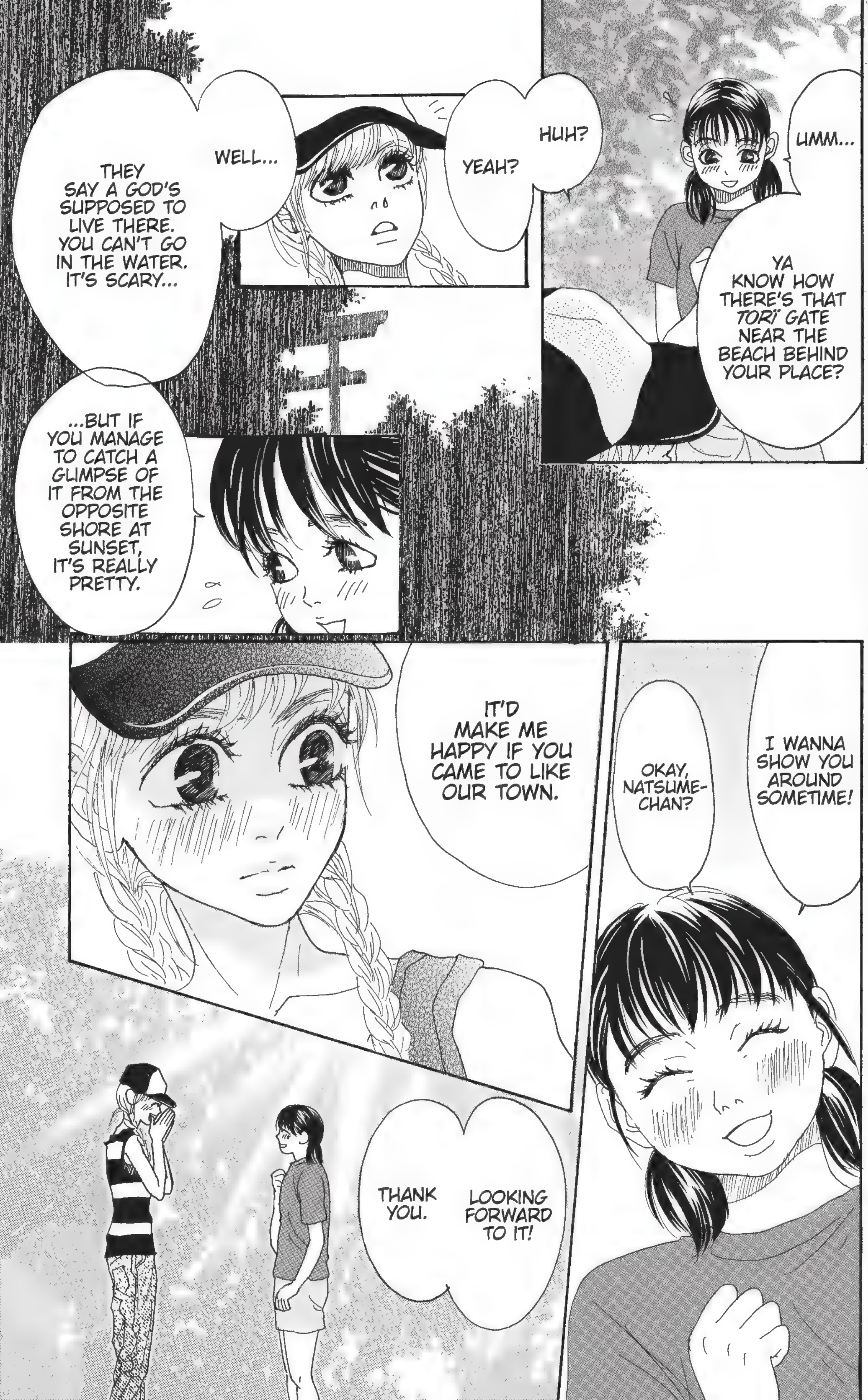

BUT YOU CAN'T GO UP THERE.
立入禁止
*SIGN: NO ENTRY
SCARY...
SIS, I'M HUNGRY!
OH!
I WANTED TO TRY THIS LOCAL SPECIALTY THEY HAVE HERE, "YAYA RICE CAKES"!
Hungry is healthy!
LET'S TRY THIS RESTAURANT! WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE THE BUS, THOUGH.
AMAZING! UKIGUMO GUIDE BOOK!
WORLD-FAMOUS YAYA CAKES! TRAVEL GUIDE RECOMMENDED!
名物ヤーヤー餅
旅
OH!
YOU HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK AND PASSED OUT LAST NIGHT. YOU DOIN' OKAY NOW?
COME ON IN!
YOU KNOW, I HAVE A DAUGHTER 'BOUT YOUR AGE...
OH, HERE SHE COMES NOW!

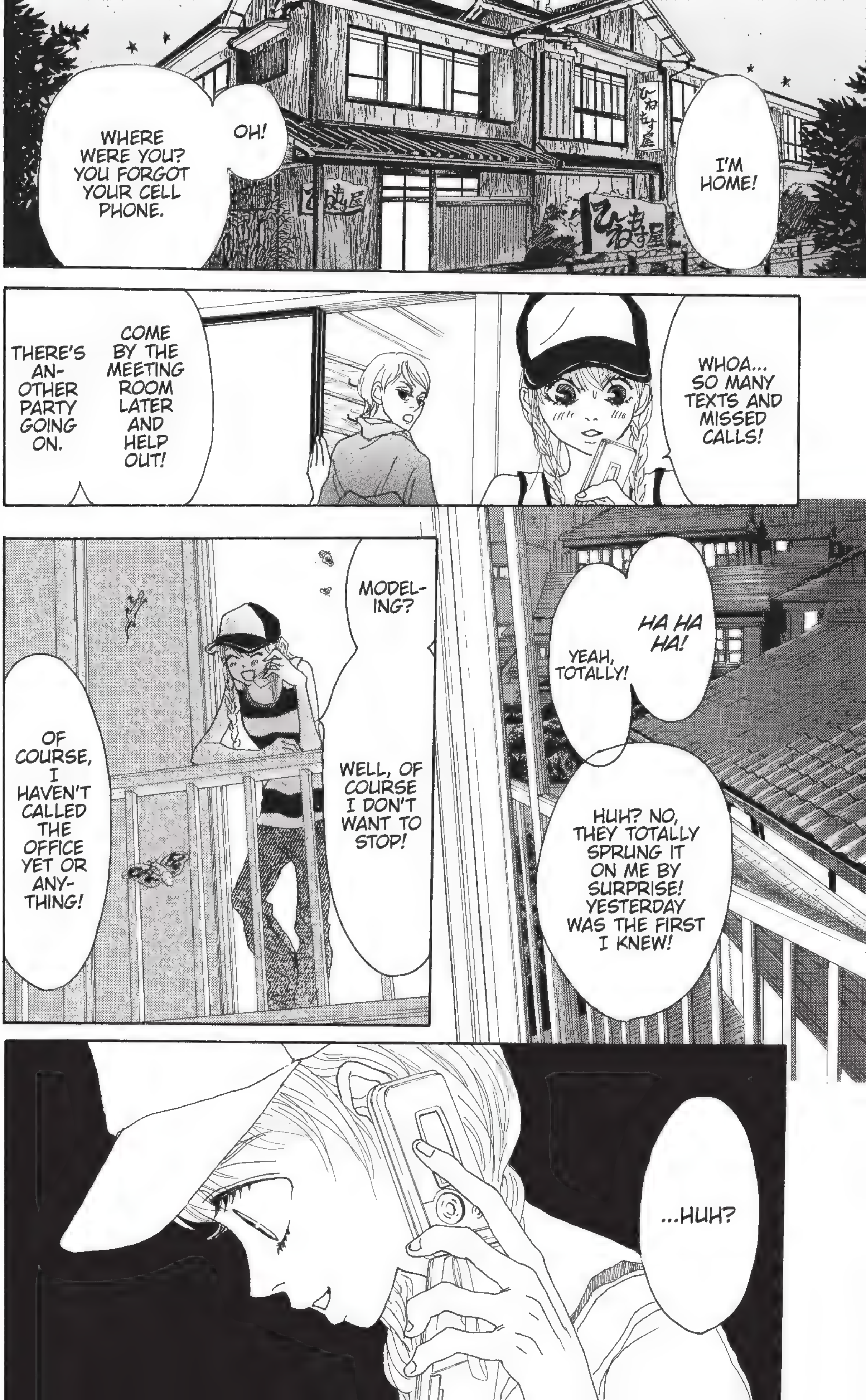

KANA!
NATSUME-CHAN FROM HINEMOSU INN IS HERE!
ドキ ドキ
BA-DUM BA-DUM
UM …
HELLO!
AAH!
キャーッ
HUH?
YOU'RE NATSUME-CHAN FROM "PLUM" MAGAZINE?!
IN THE FLESH!
かわいーッ
SO CUTE!

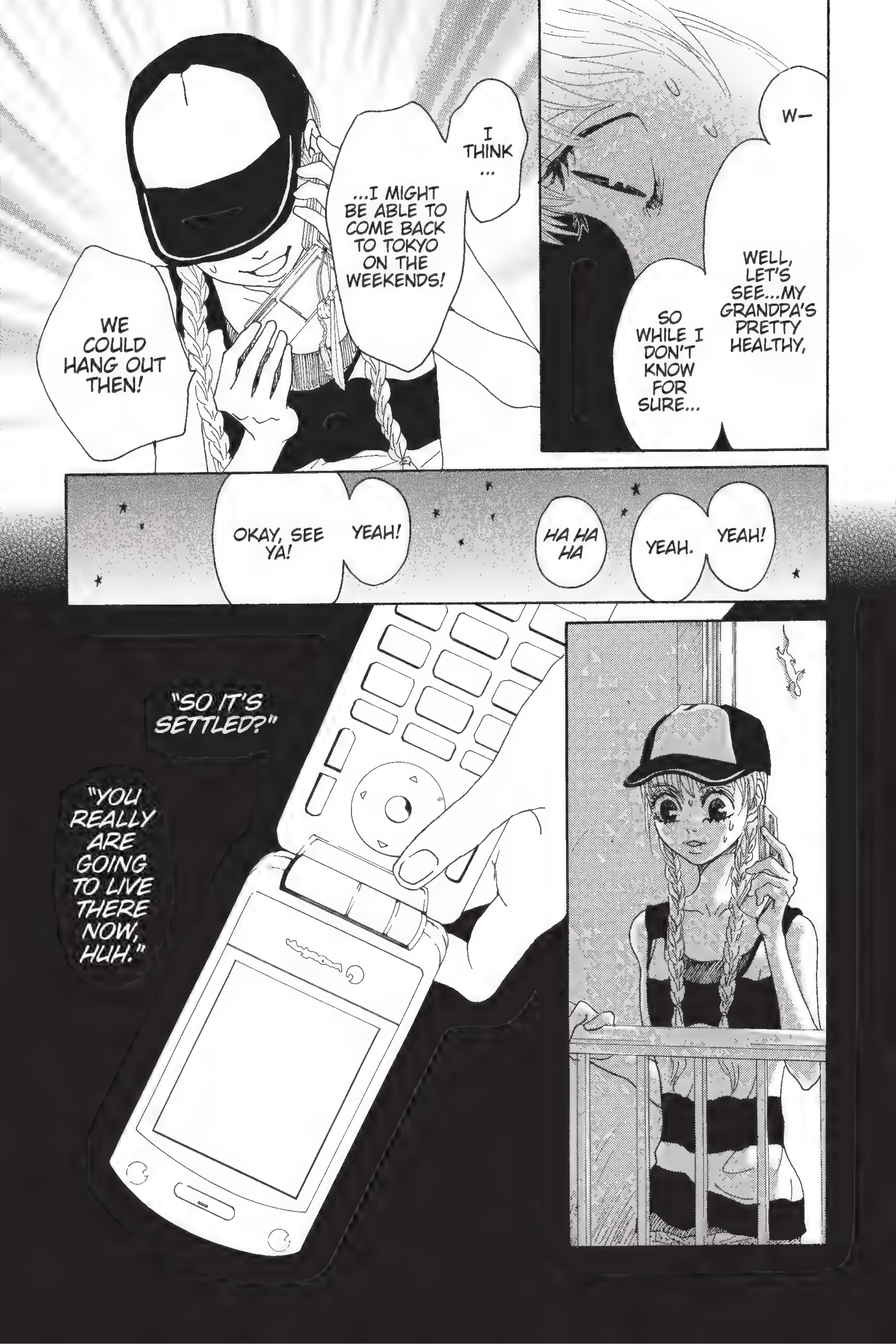

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
A CELEBRITY IN MY CLASS, STARTING TOMORROW!
OH, IT'S NO MORE INVOLVED THAN A SCHOOL CLUB. I CAN HARDLY BE CALLED A CELEBRITY FOR THAT.
...ANYWAY, WE MOVED HERE, SO I QUIT.
WHAT?!
THAT AIN'T RIGHT!
NATSUME-CHAN... IS IT TRUE YOU'RE LIVIN' WITH THE OLD GUY WHO RUNS HINEMOSU INN?
THAT'S REALLY CLOSE TO KOU-CHAN'S PLACE, INNIT?

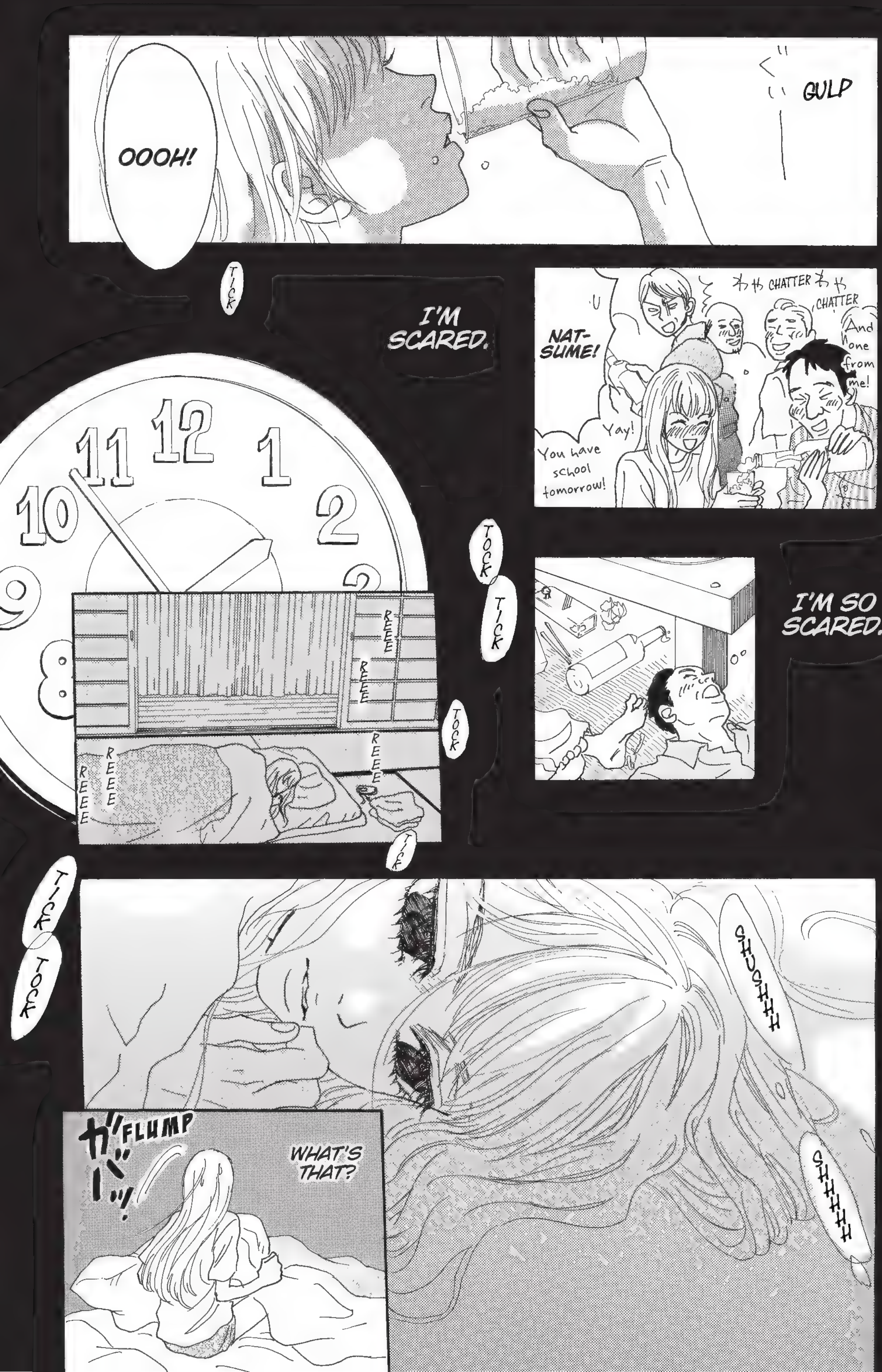

WHO'S KOU-CHAN?
WELL...
HE'S A WILD 'UN.
YEAH?
SURE IS.
YOU KNOW THAT HOUSE ON THE HILL WITH THE STONE WALL AROUND IT? YOU CAN SEE IT FROM YOUR PLACE, RIGHT?
THE SPOILED BRAT WHO LIVES THERE, KOICHIRO HASEGAWA.
"SPOILED BRAT"? I WONDER IF SHE HEARD THAT FROM HER PARENTS.
I'VE BEEN TO HIS HOUSE ONCE. A GROUP STUDY SESSION.
I'VE HEARD THIS STORY A HUNDRED TIMES...
HE'S BEEN PRETENDIN' TO BE IN JUNIOR HIGH AND RIDIN' A SCOOTER AROUND!
SO I HEARD! THAT'S DANGEROUS!
...

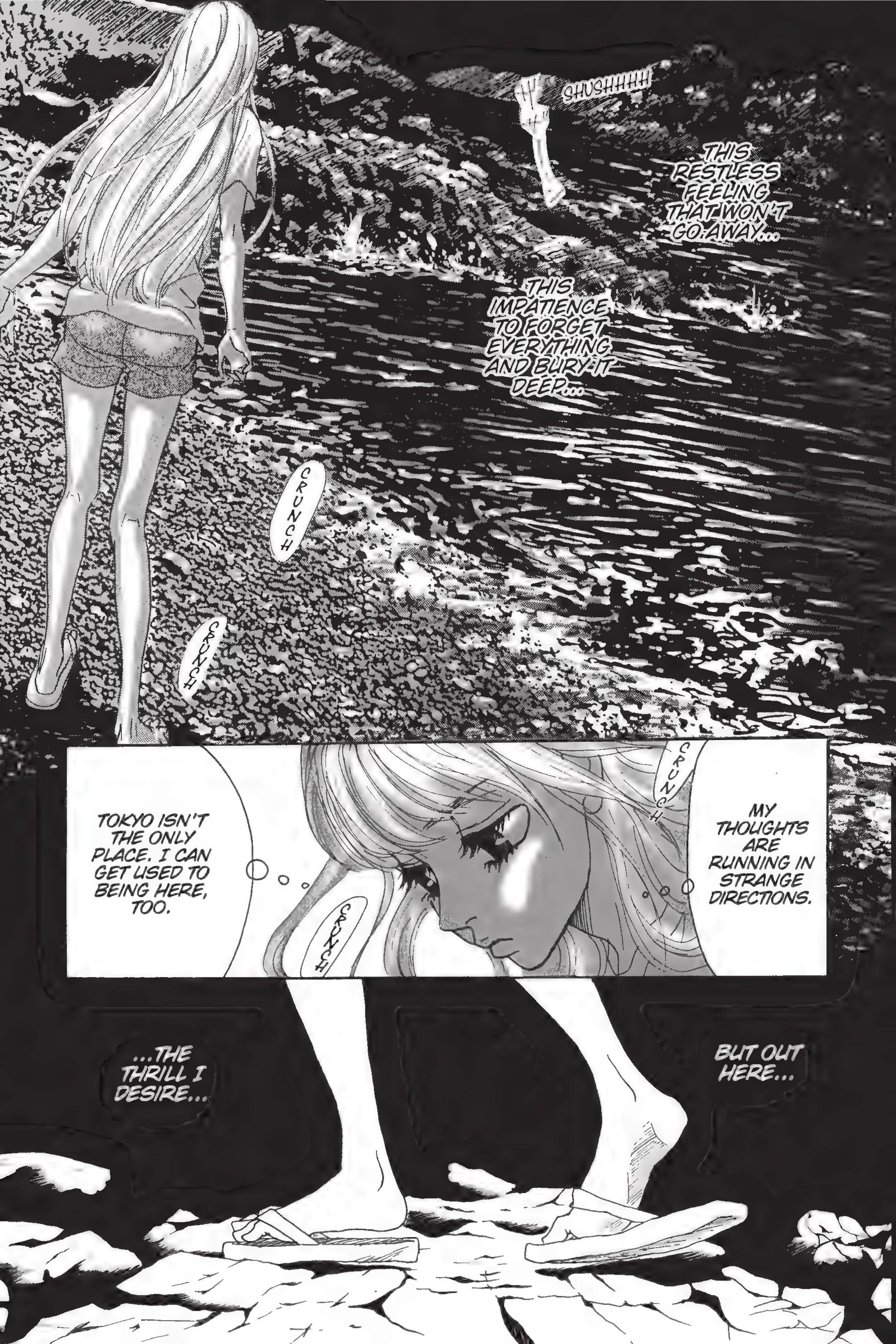

OH, I SEE. THIS "KOU-CHAN" MUST BE A POPULAR BOY.
I DON'T GET IT.
BOYS OUR AGE ARE STILL KIDS. THEY'RE STILL A REALLY LONG WAY FROM BEING GROWN UP.
NATSUME-CHAN.
THE LAST BUS IS COMING SOON.
WHAT?!
THE EARLY EVENING BUS IS THE LAST?!
SEE YA TOMORROW!
OH, HEY!
NATSUME-CHAN!
YOU'RE TOTALLY ONE OF US NOW!
...YAY!
Is that good or bad...?
NATSUME-CHAN!

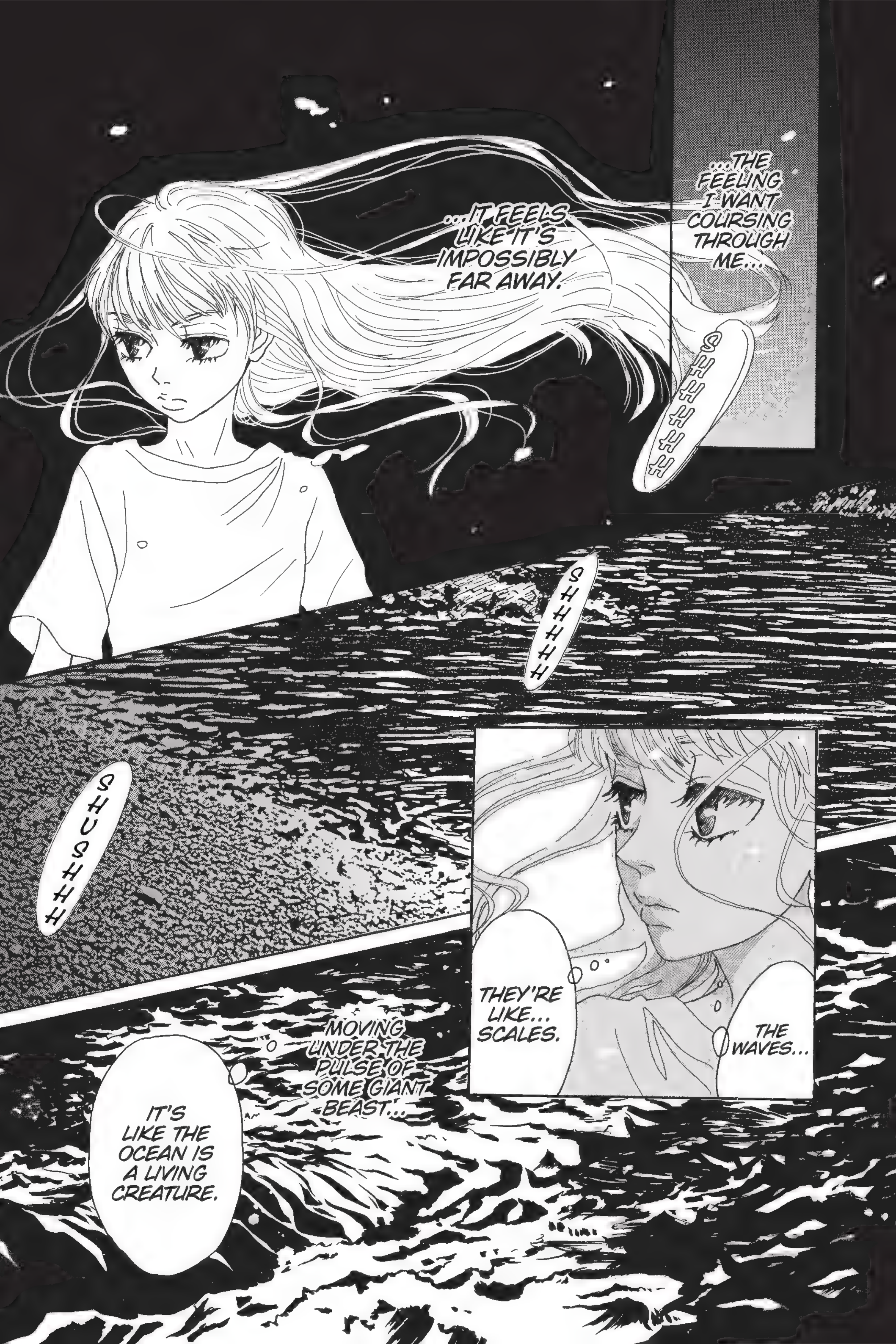

UMM...
YA KNOW HOW THERE'S THAT *TORII* GATE NEAR THE BEACH BEHIND YOUR PLACE?
HUH?
YEAH?
WELL...
THEY SAY A GOD'S SUPPOSED TO LIVE THERE. YOU CAN'T GO IN THE WATER. IT'S SCARY...
...BUT IF YOU MANAGE TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF IT FROM THE OPPOSITE SHORE AT SUNSET, IT'S REALLY PRETTY.
I WANNA SHOW YOU AROUND SOMETIME!
OKAY, NATSUME-CHAN?
IT'D MAKE ME HAPPY IF YOU CAME TO LIKE OUR TOWN.
LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!
THANK YOU.

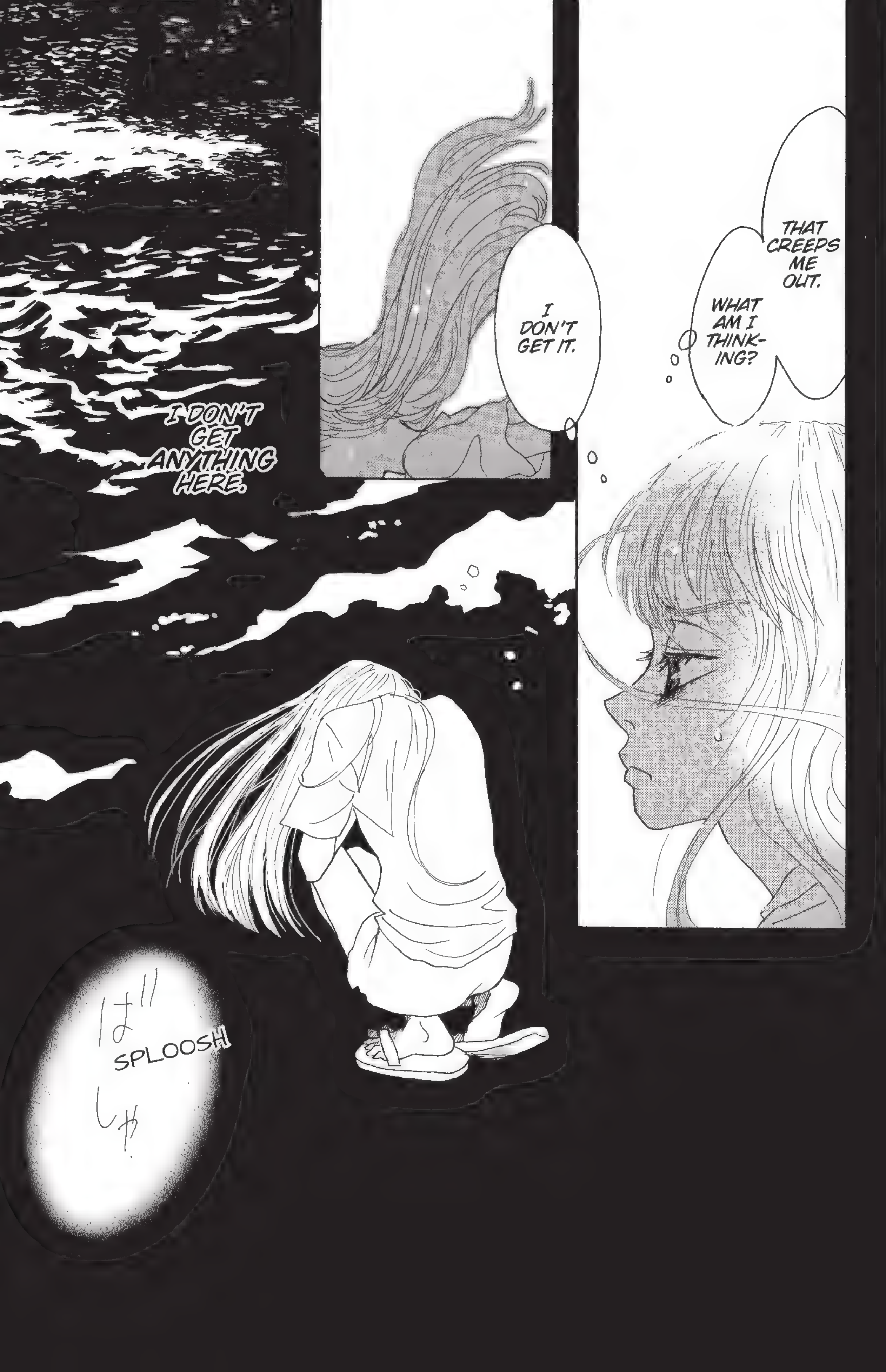

ひねもす屋
I'M HOME!
OH!
WHERE WERE YOU? YOU FORGOT YOUR CELL PHONE.
WHOA... SO MANY TEXTS AND MISSED CALLS!
COME BY THE MEETING ROOM LATER AND HELP OUT!
THERE'S ANOTHER PARTY GOING ON.
HA HA HA!
YEAH, TOTALLY!
HUH? NO, THEY TOTALLY SPRUNG IT ON ME BY SURPRISE! YESTERDAY WAS THE FIRST I KNEW!
MODELING?
WELL, OF COURSE I DON'T WANT TO STOP!
OF COURSE, I HAVEN'T CALLED THE OFFICE YET OR ANYTHING!
...HUH?

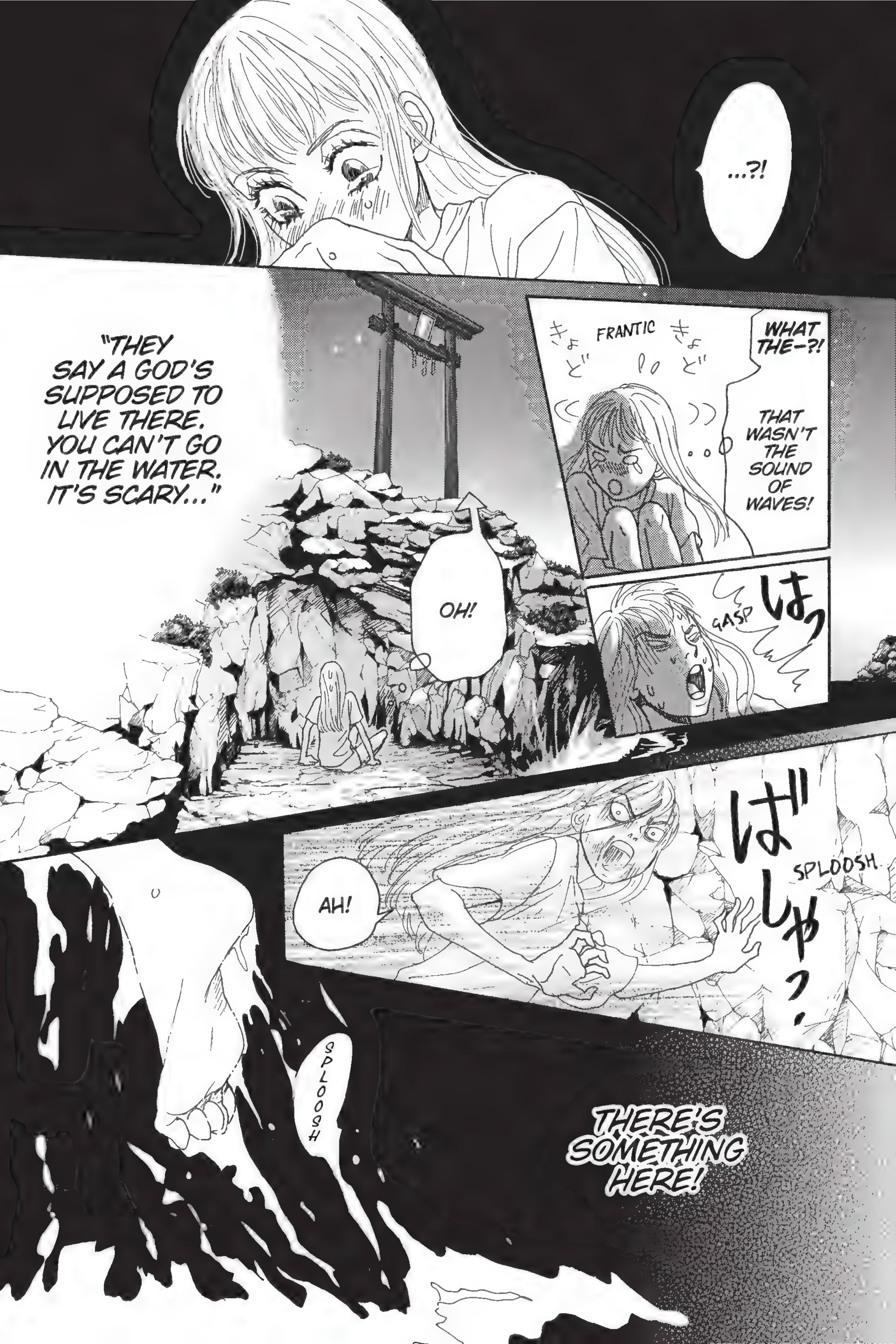

W—
WELL, LET'S SEE...MY GRANDPA'S PRETTY HEALTHY,
SO WHILE I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE...
I THINK...
...I MIGHT BE ABLE TO COME BACK TO TOKYO ON THE WEEKENDS!
WE COULD HANG OUT THEN!
YEAH!
YEAH.
HA HA HA
YEAH!
OKAY, SEE YA!
"SO IT'S SETTLED?"
"YOU REALLY ARE GOING TO LIVE THERE NOW, HUH."

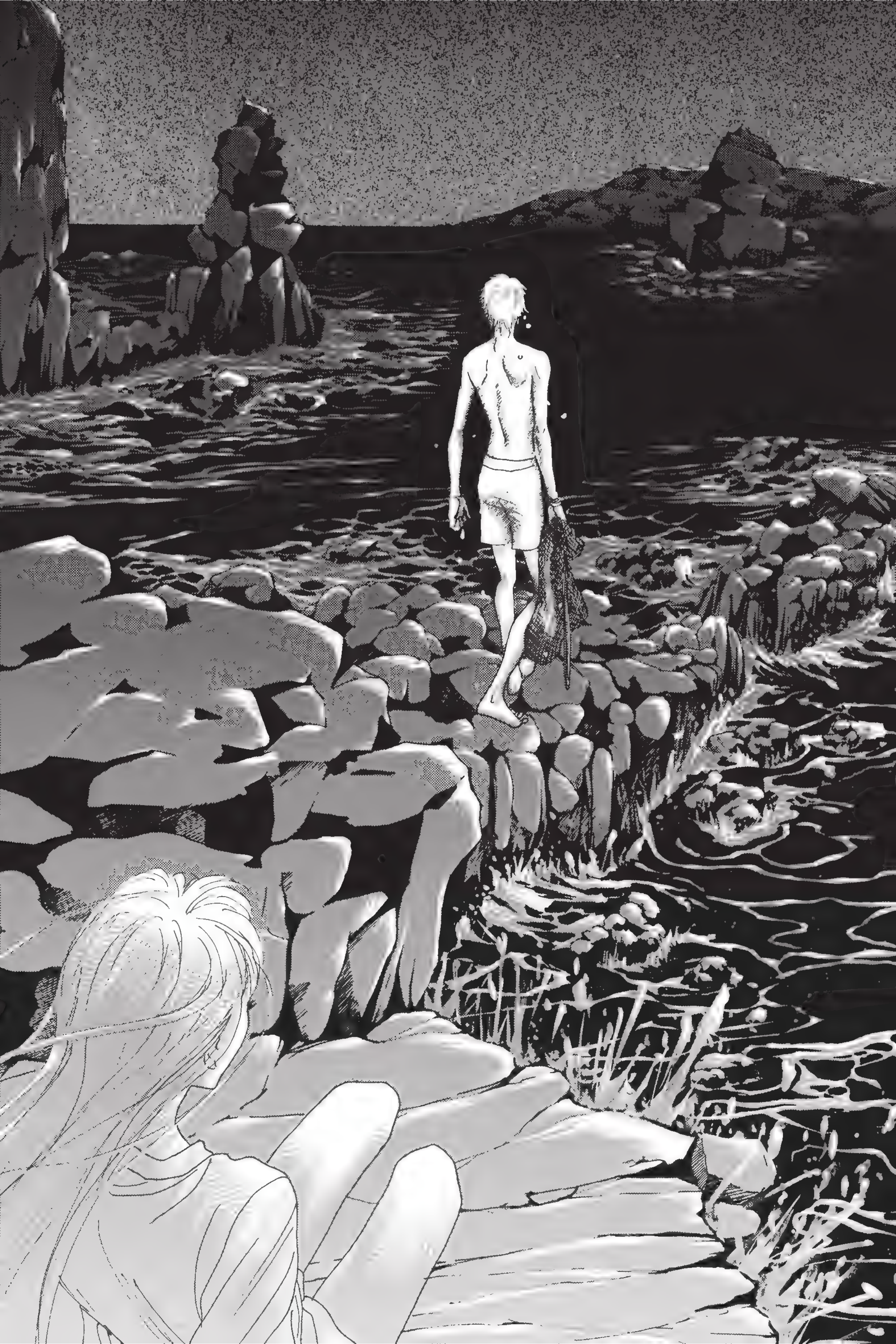

GULP
OOOH!
NAT-SUME!
CHATTER
CHATTER
And one from me!
Yay!
You have school tomorrow!
I'M SCARED.
TICK
I'M SO SCARED.
TOCK
TICK
REEE
REEE
REEE
REEE
REEE
TOCK
TICK
TICK
TOCK
SHUSHHH
SHHHHH
FLUMP
WHAT'S THAT?

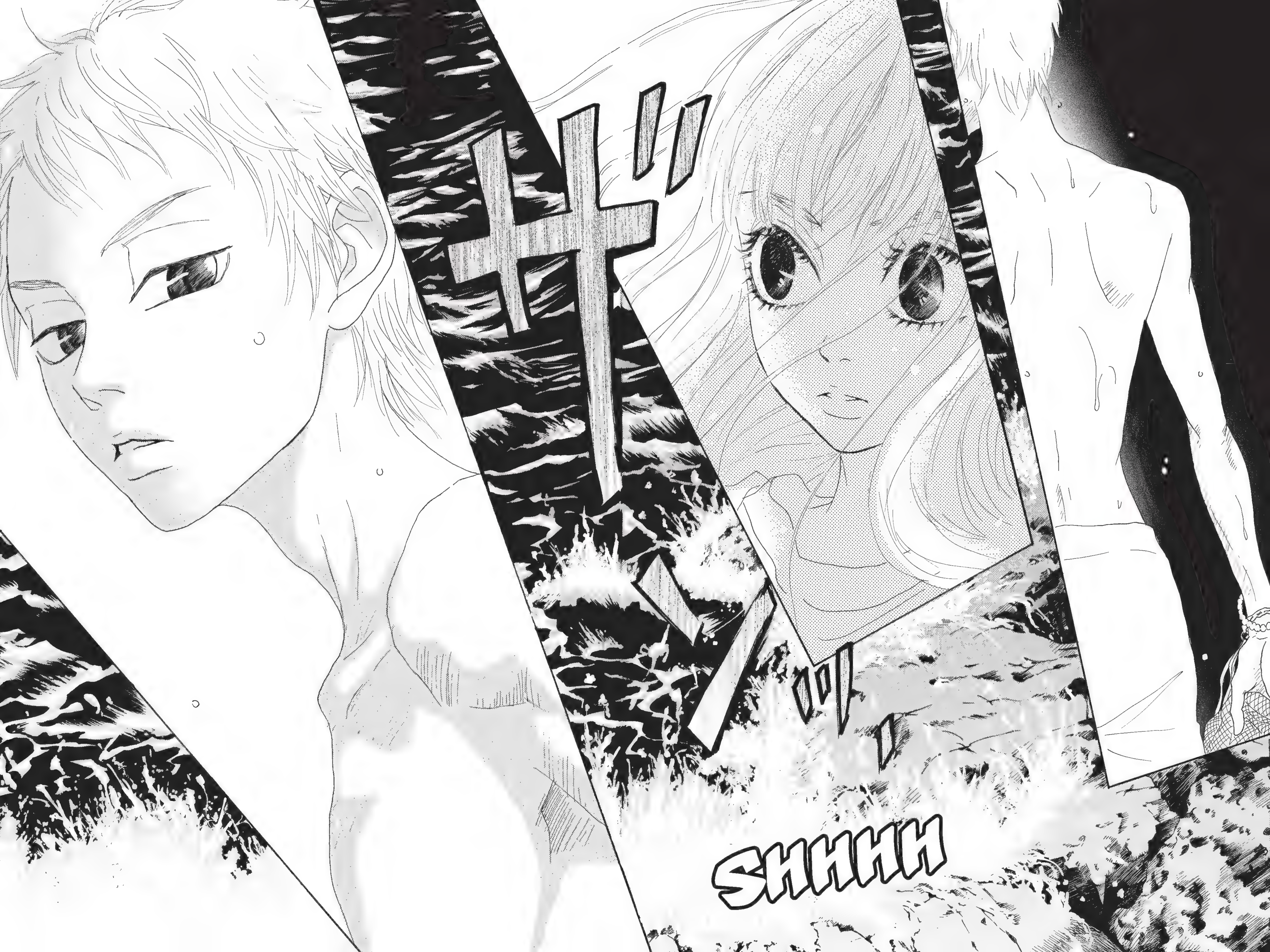

SHUSHHHH
THIS RESTLESS FEELING THAT WON'T GO AWAY...
THIS IMPATIENCE TO FORGET EVERYTHING AND BURY IT DEEP...
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
MY THOUGHTS ARE RUNNING IN STRANGE DIRECTIONS.
CRUNCH
TOKYO ISN'T THE ONLY PLACE. I CAN GET USED TO BEING HERE, TOO.
BUT OUT HERE...
...THE THRILL I DESIRE...

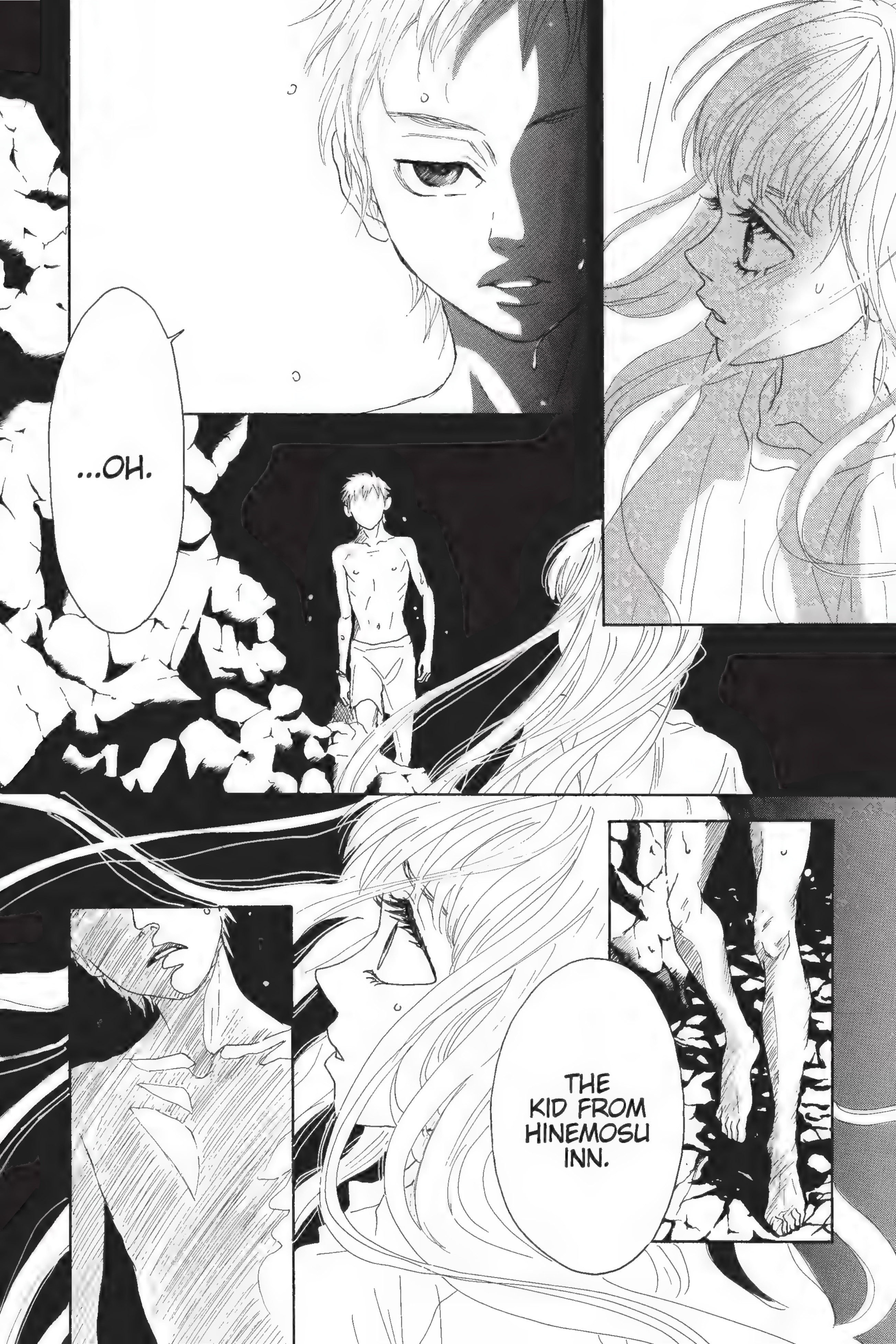

...THE FEELING I WANT COURSING THROUGH ME...
...IT FEELS LIKE IT'S IMPOSSIBLY FAR AWAY.
SHHHHHH
SHHHHH
SHUSHHH
THE WAVES...
THEY'RE LIKE... SCALES.
MOVING UNDER THE PULSE OF SOME GIANT BEAST...
IT'S LIKE THE OCEAN IS A LIVING CREATURE.

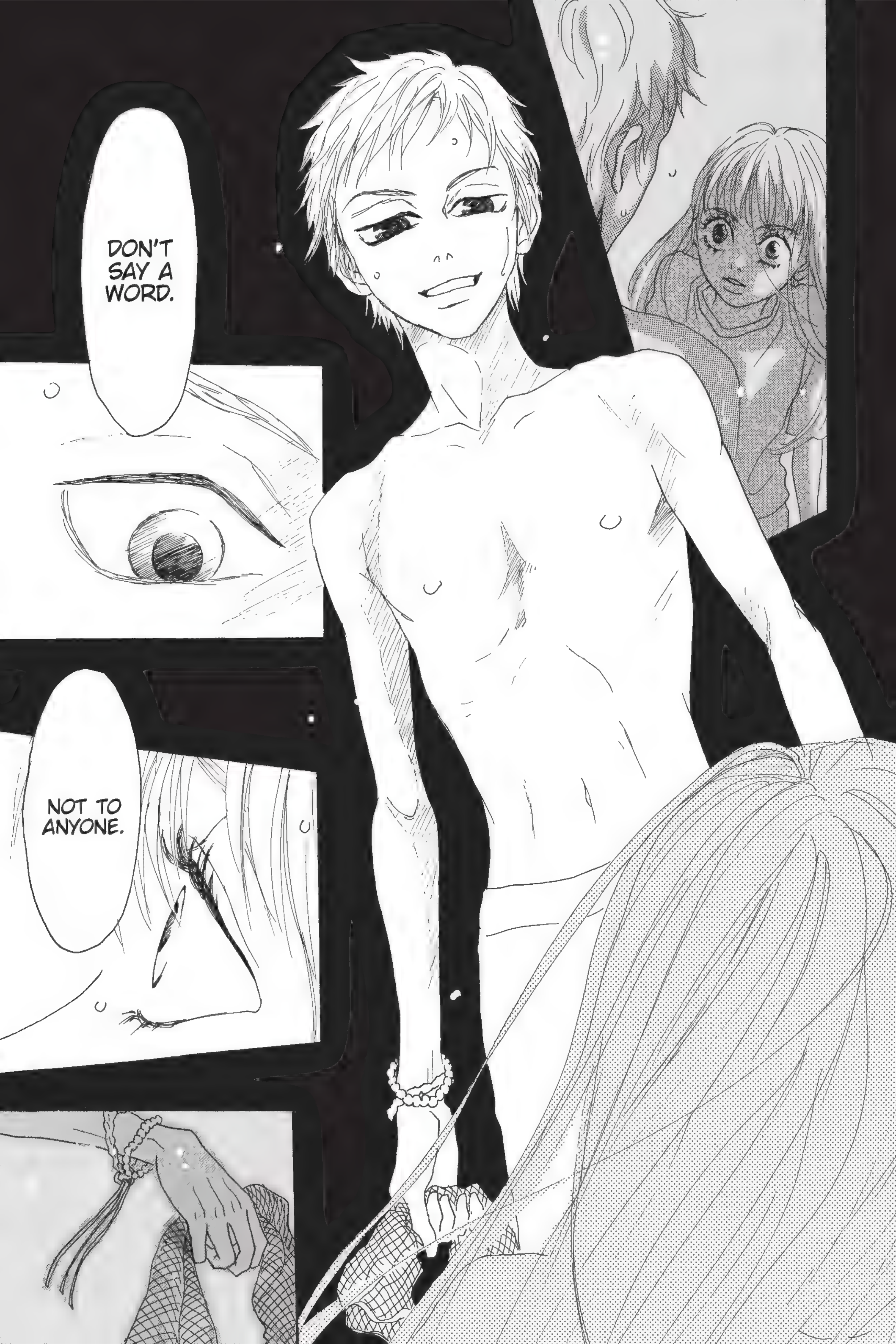

THAT CREEPS ME OUT.
WHAT AM I THINKING?
I DON'T GET IT.
I DON'T GET ANYTHING HERE.
ぱしゃ
SPLOOSH

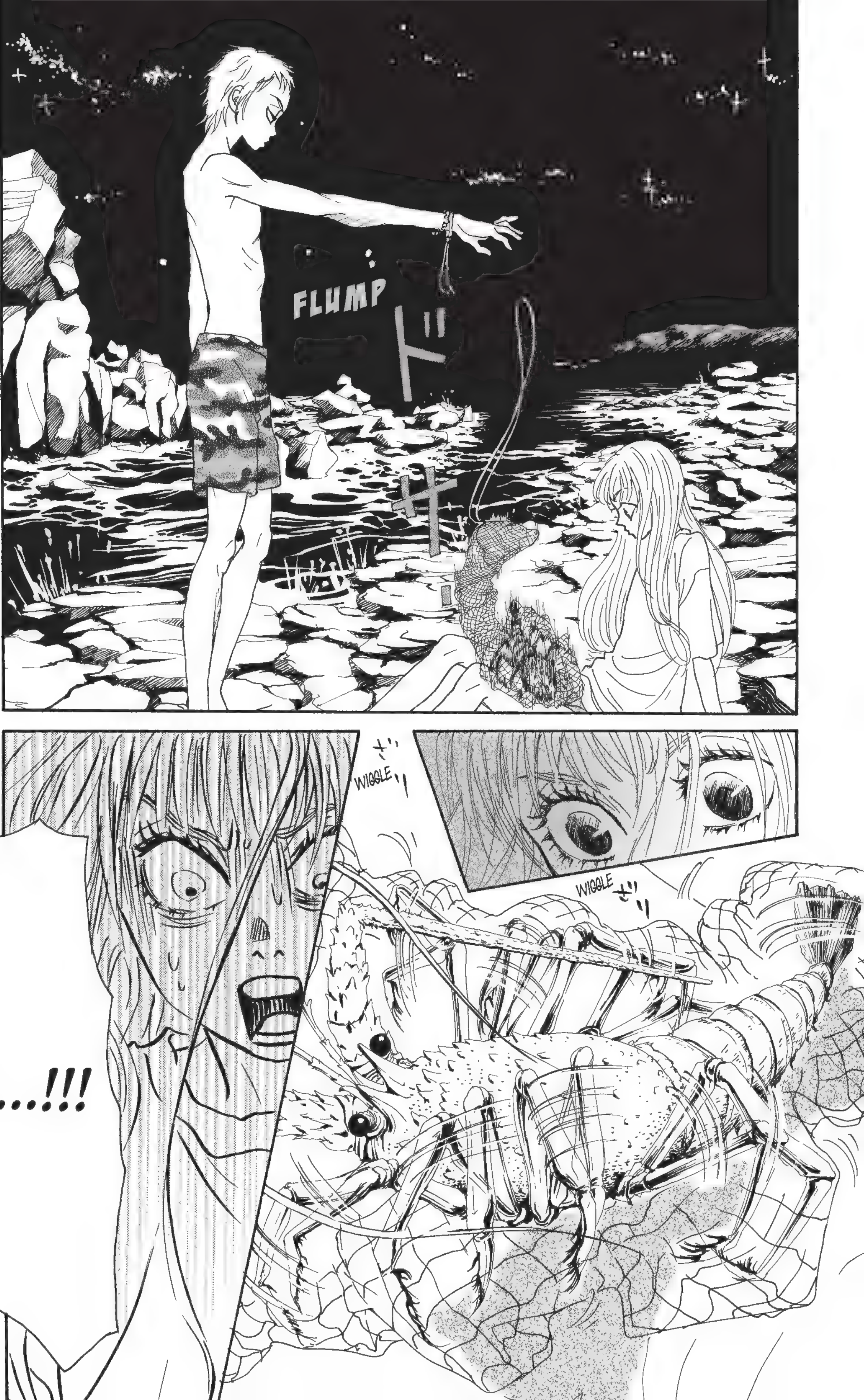

...?!
WHAT THE-?!
THAT WASN'T THE SOUND OF WAVES!
きょど きょど
FRANTIC
はっ
GASP
"THEY SAY A GOD'S SUPPOSED TO LIVE THERE. YOU CAN'T GO IN THE WATER. IT'S SCARY..."
OH!
ばしゃっ
SPLOOSH
AH!
SPLOOSH
THERE'S SOMETHING HERE!

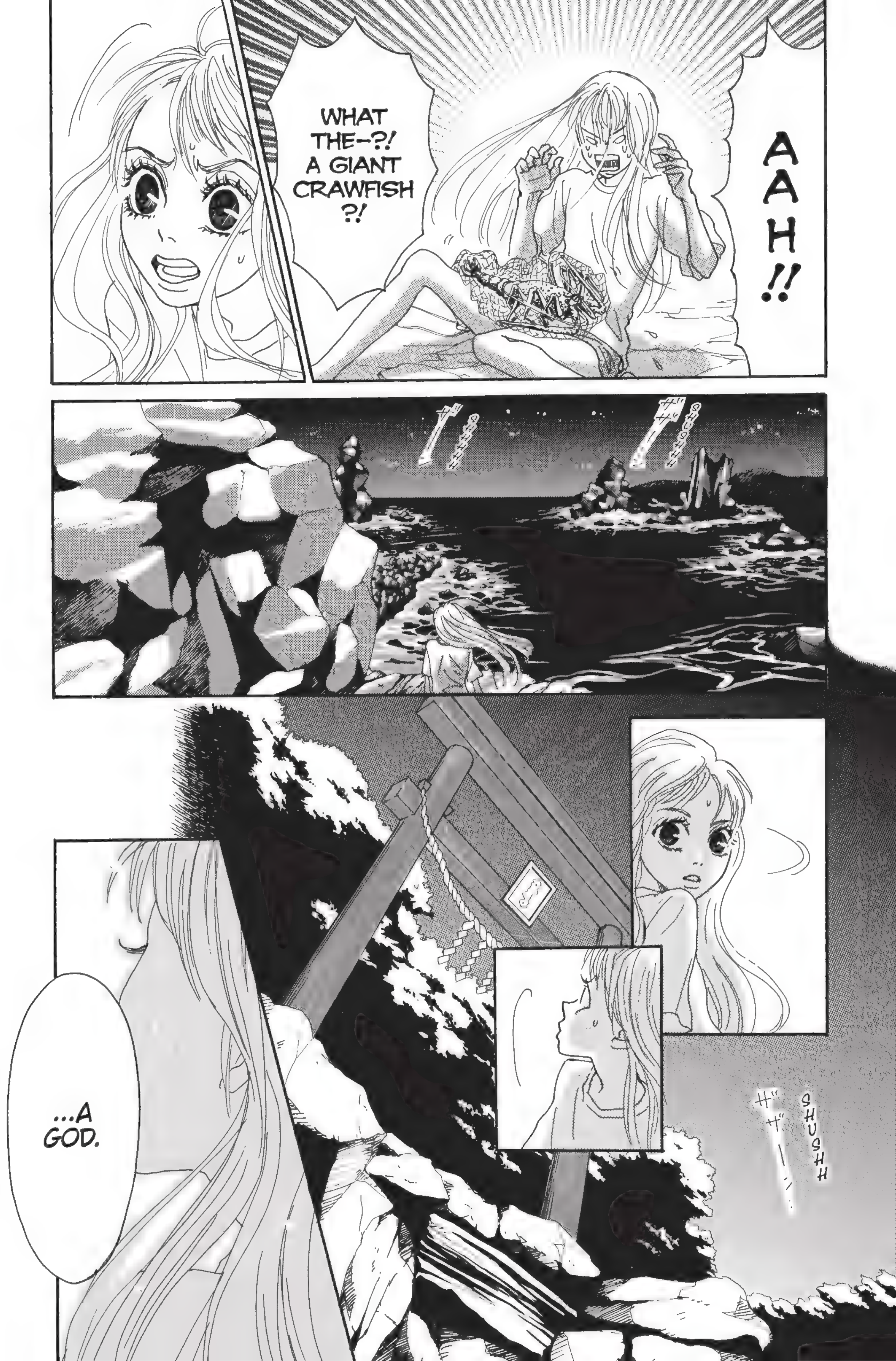


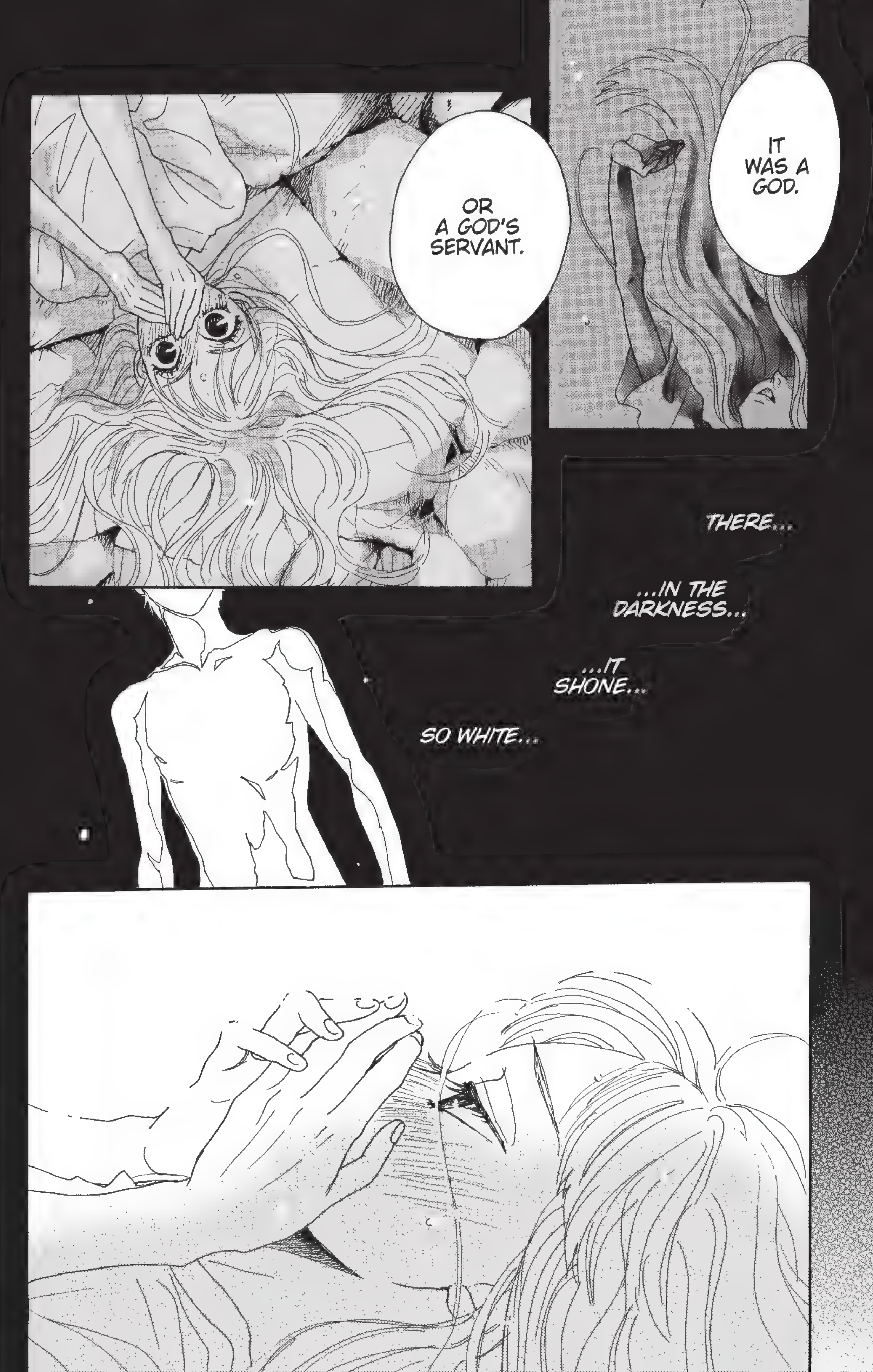

ザザ
SHHHH

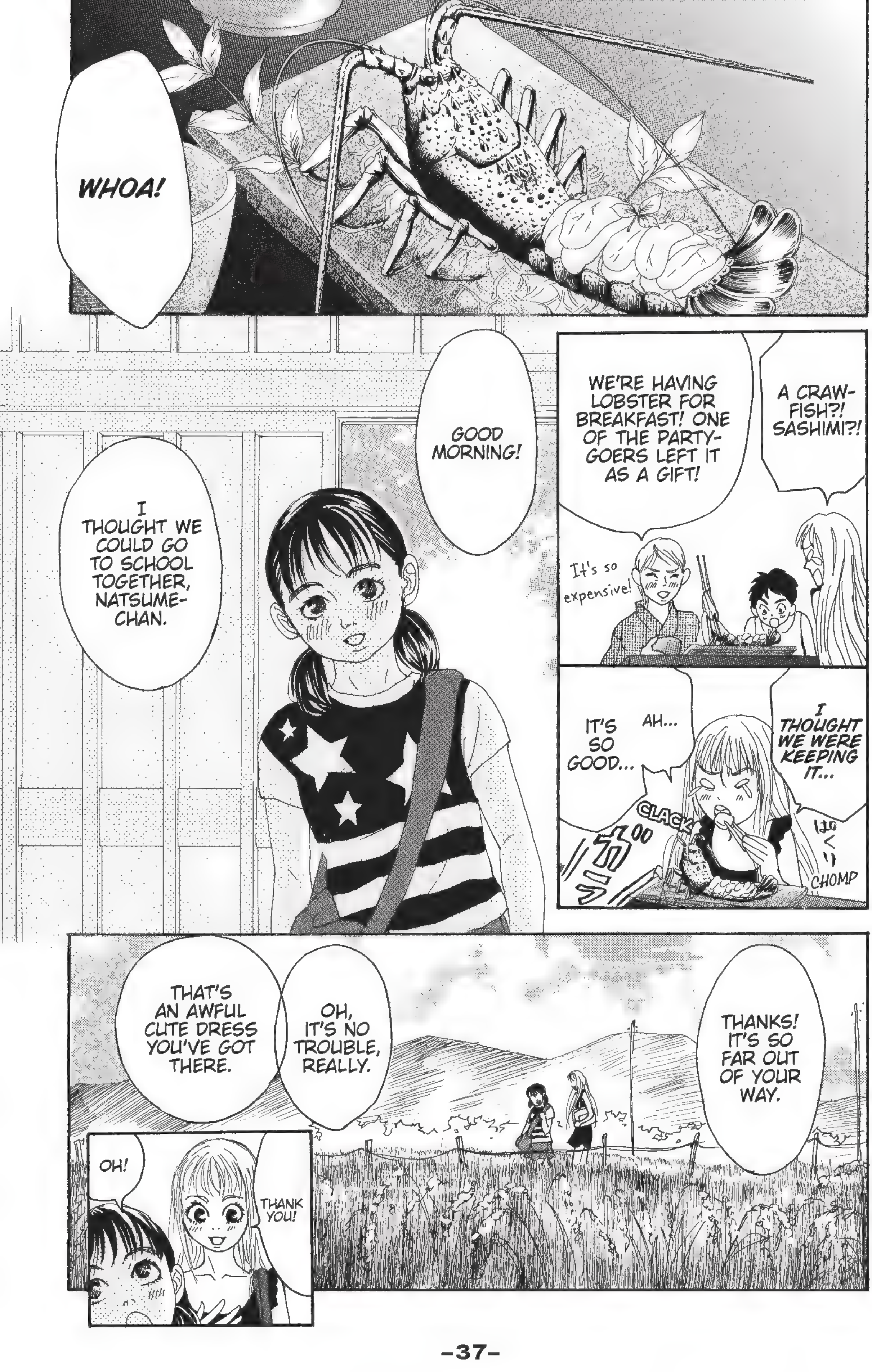

...OH.
THE KID FROM HINEMOSU INN.

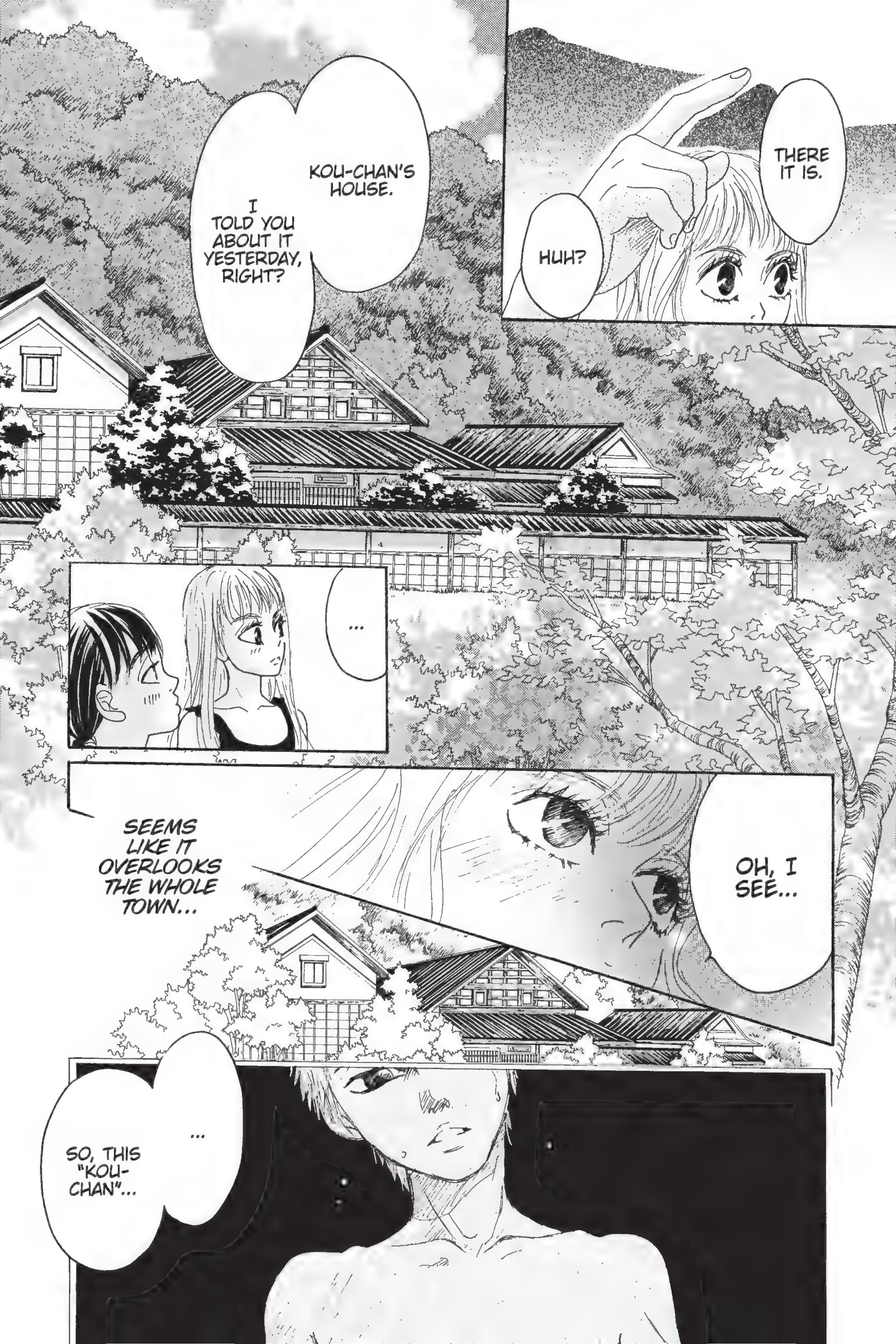

DON'T SAY A WORD.
NOT TO ANYONE.

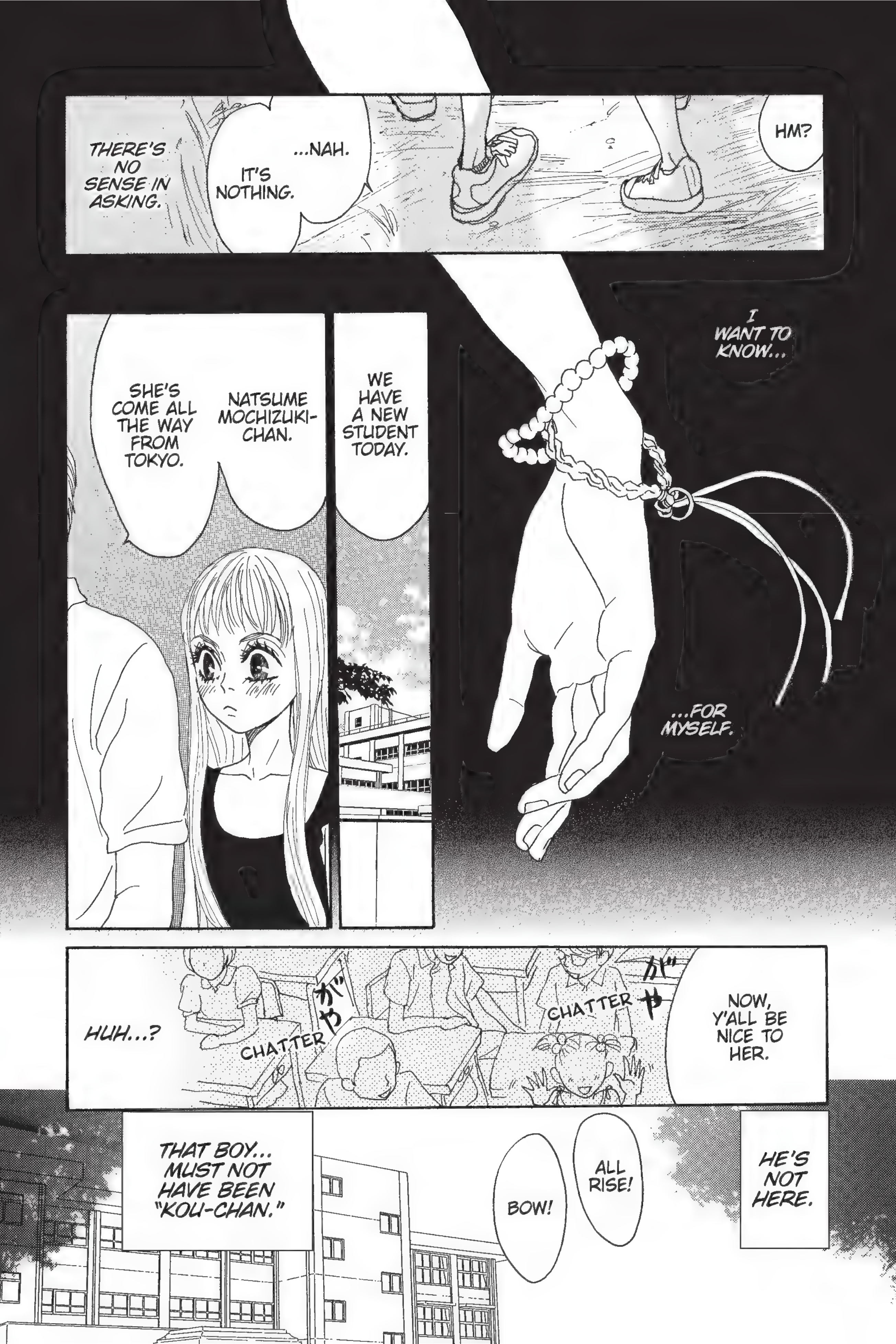

FLUMP
ド
ザ
WIGGLE ざり
WIGGLE ざり
...!!!

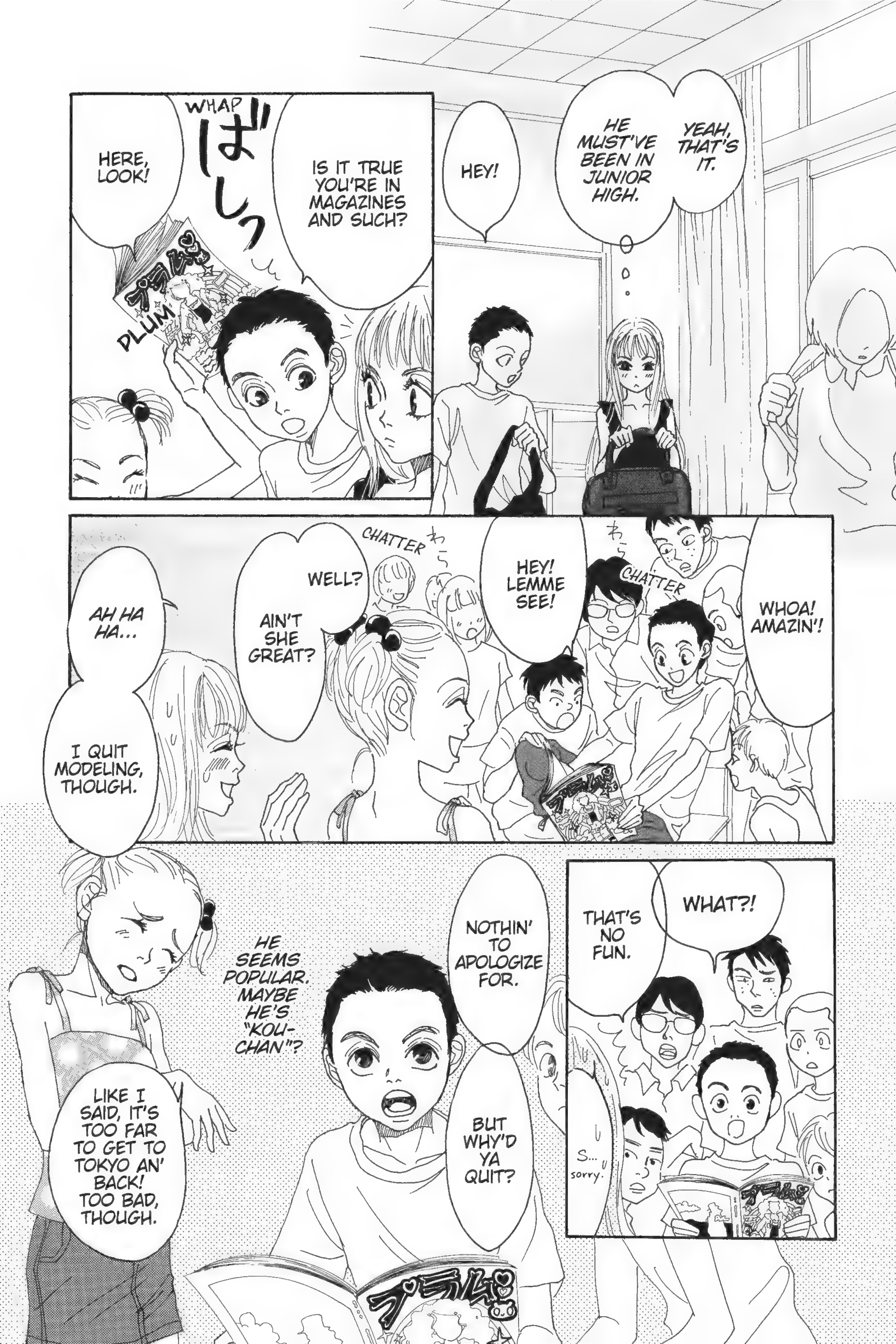

AAH!!
WHAT THE-?! A GIANT CRAWFISH?!
SHUSHH
SHUSHH
SHUSHH
...A GOD.

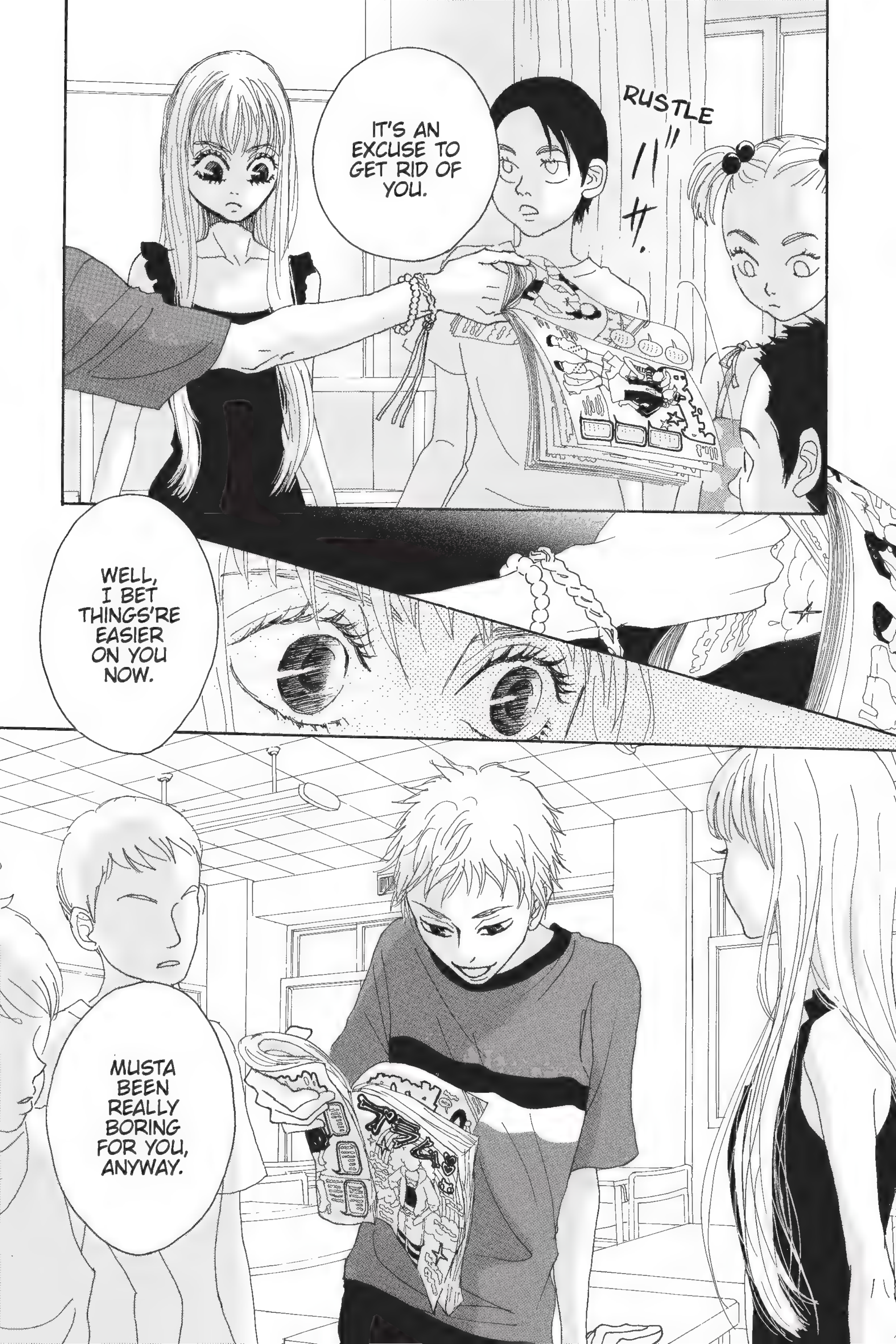

IT WAS A GOD.
OR A GOD'S SERVANT.
THERE...
...IN THE DARKNESS...
...IT SHONE...
SO WHITE...

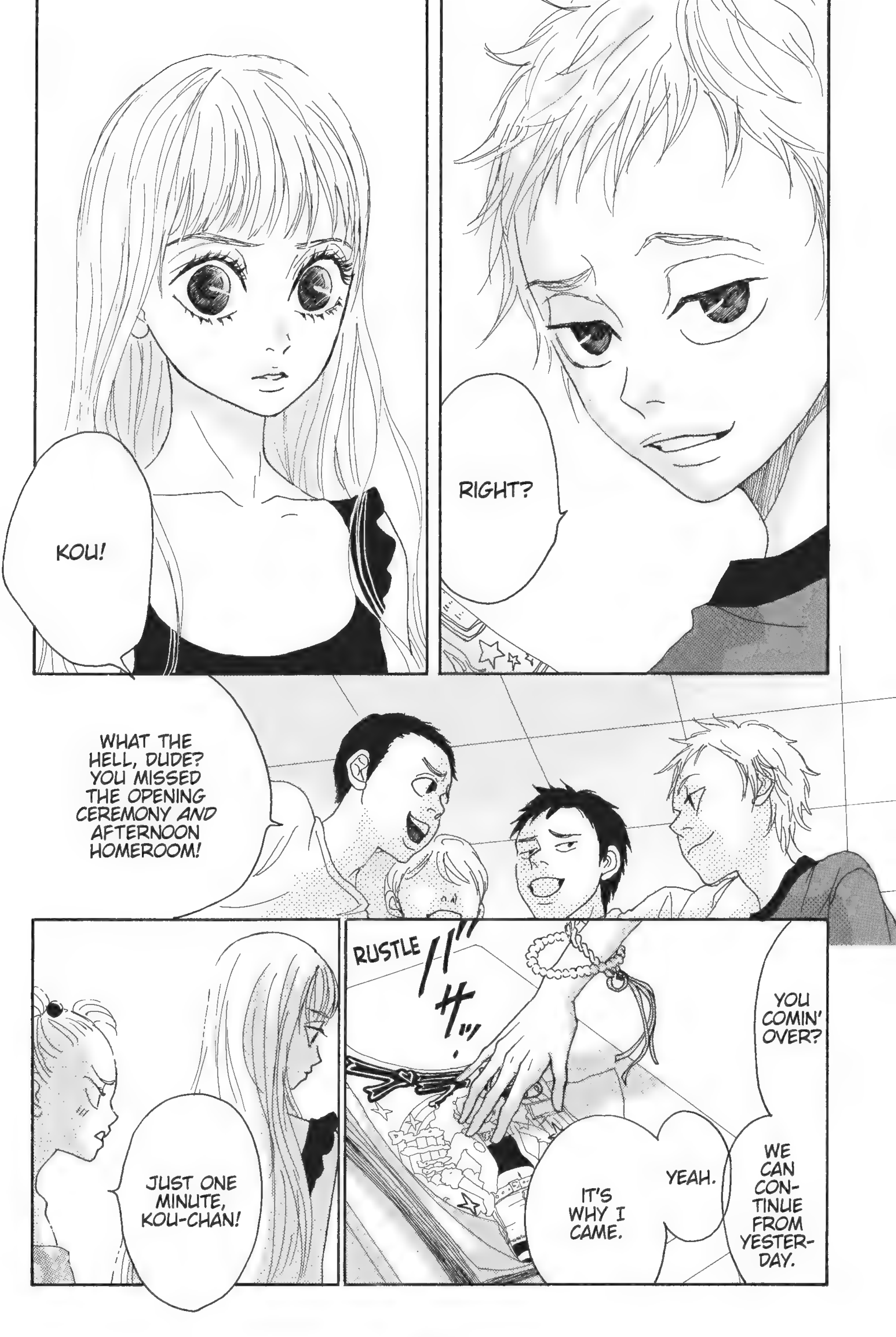

WHOA!
A CRAW-FISH?! SASHIMI?!
WE'RE HAVING LOBSTER FOR BREAKFAST! ONE OF THE PARTY-GOERS LEFT IT AS A GIFT!
It's so expensive!
I THOUGHT WE WERE KEEPING IT...
ぱくり
CHOMP
AH...
IT'S SO GOOD...
CLACK
ガシッ
GOOD MORNING!
I THOUGHT WE COULD GO TO SCHOOL TOGETHER, NATSUME-CHAN.
THANKS! IT'S SO FAR OUT OF YOUR WAY.
OH, IT'S NO TROUBLE, REALLY.
THAT'S AN AWFUL CUTE DRESS YOU'VE GOT THERE.
THANK YOU!
OH!

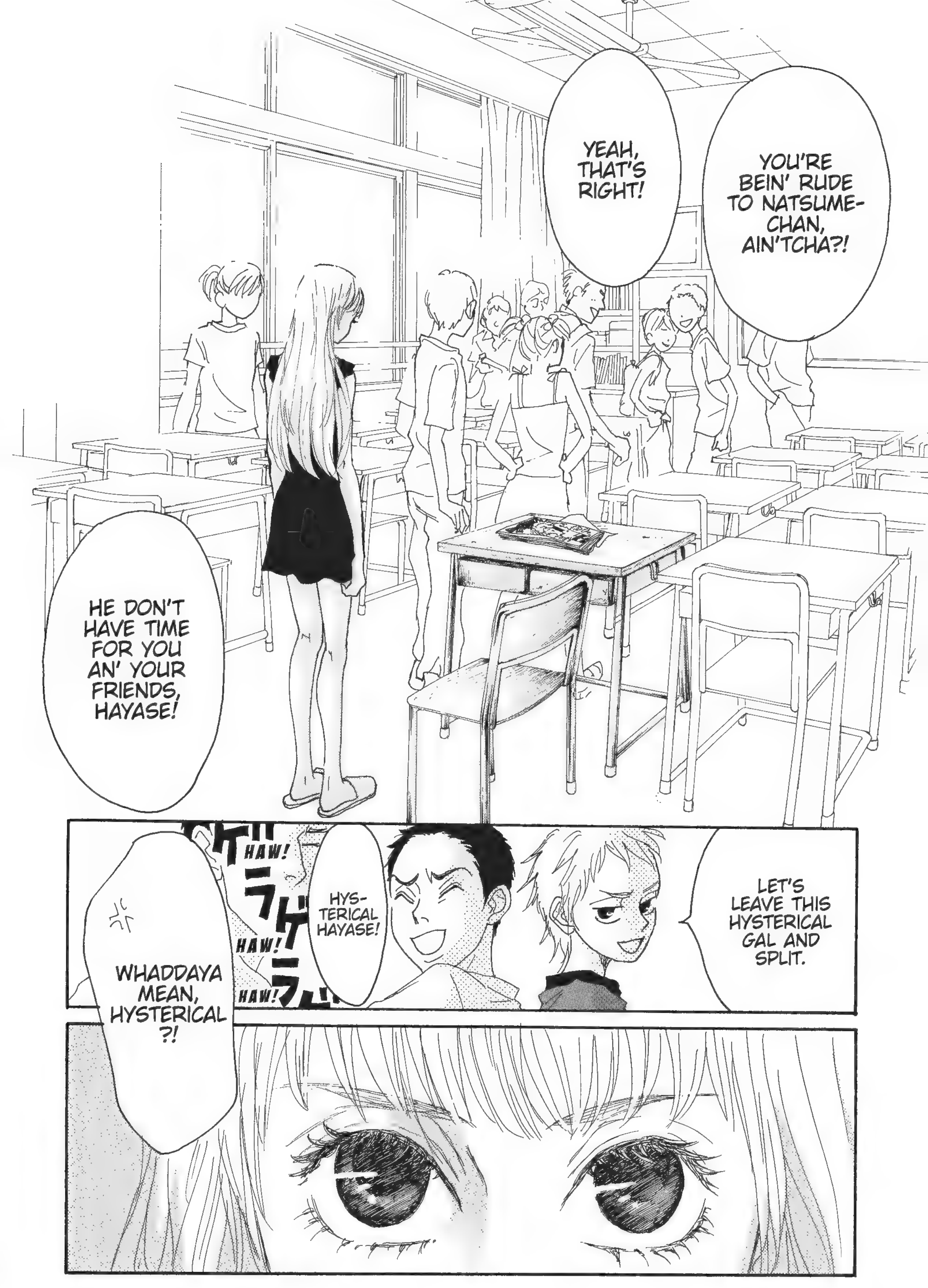

THERE IT IS.
HUH?
KOU-CHAN'S HOUSE.
I TOLD YOU ABOUT IT YESTERDAY, RIGHT?
...
OH, I SEE...
SEEMS LIKE IT OVERLOOKS THE WHOLE TOWN...
...
SO, THIS "KOU-CHAN"...

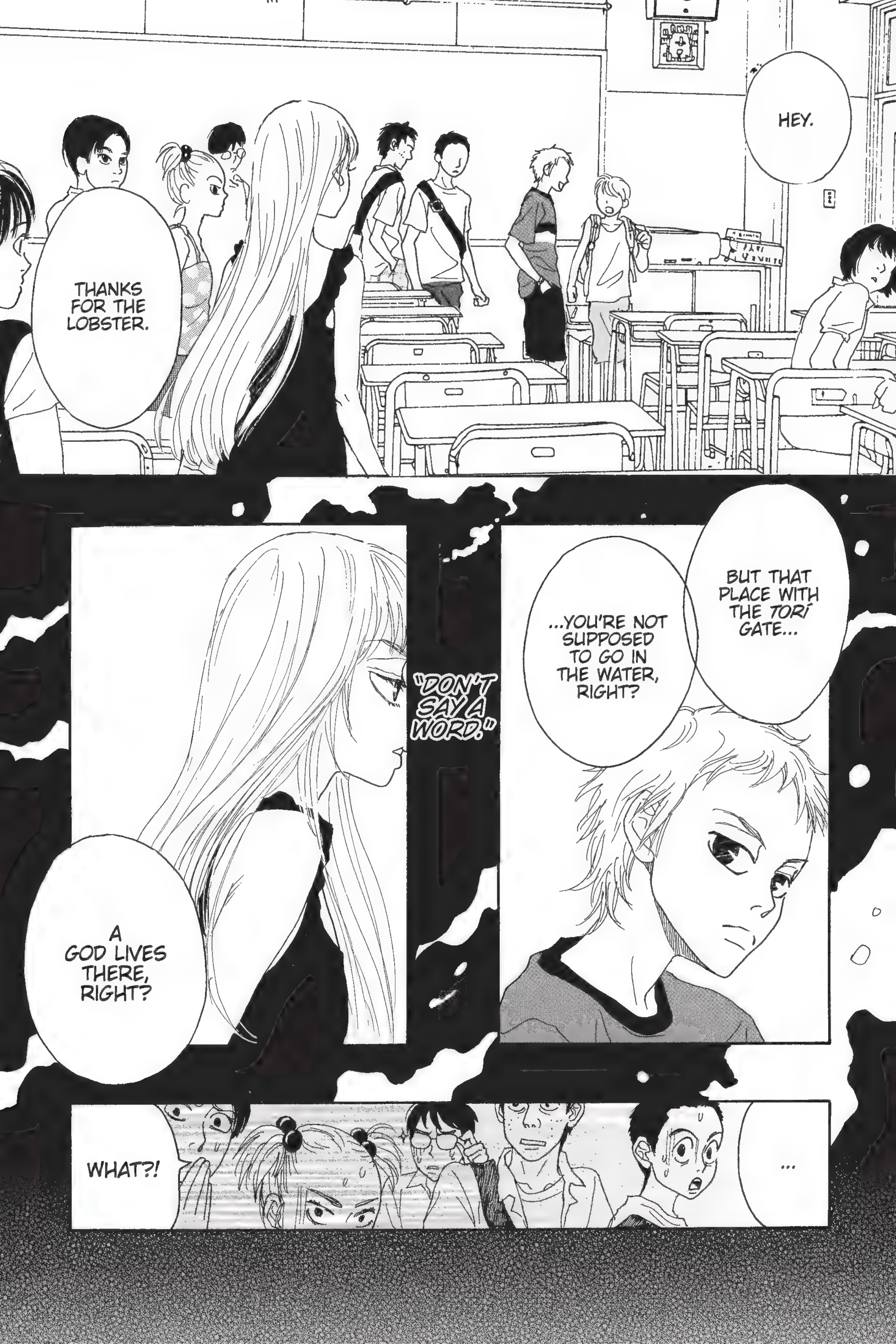

HM?
...NAH.
IT'S NOTHING.
THERE'S NO SENSE IN ASKING.
I WANT TO KNOW...
...FOR MYSELF.
WE HAVE A NEW STUDENT TODAY.
NATSUME MOCHIZUKI-CHAN.
SHE'S COME ALL THE WAY FROM TOKYO.
NOW, Y'ALL BE NICE TO HER.
がや
CHATTER
がや
CHATTER
HUH...?
HE'S NOT HERE.
ALL RISE!
BOW!
THAT BOY... MUST NOT HAVE BEEN "KOU-CHAN."

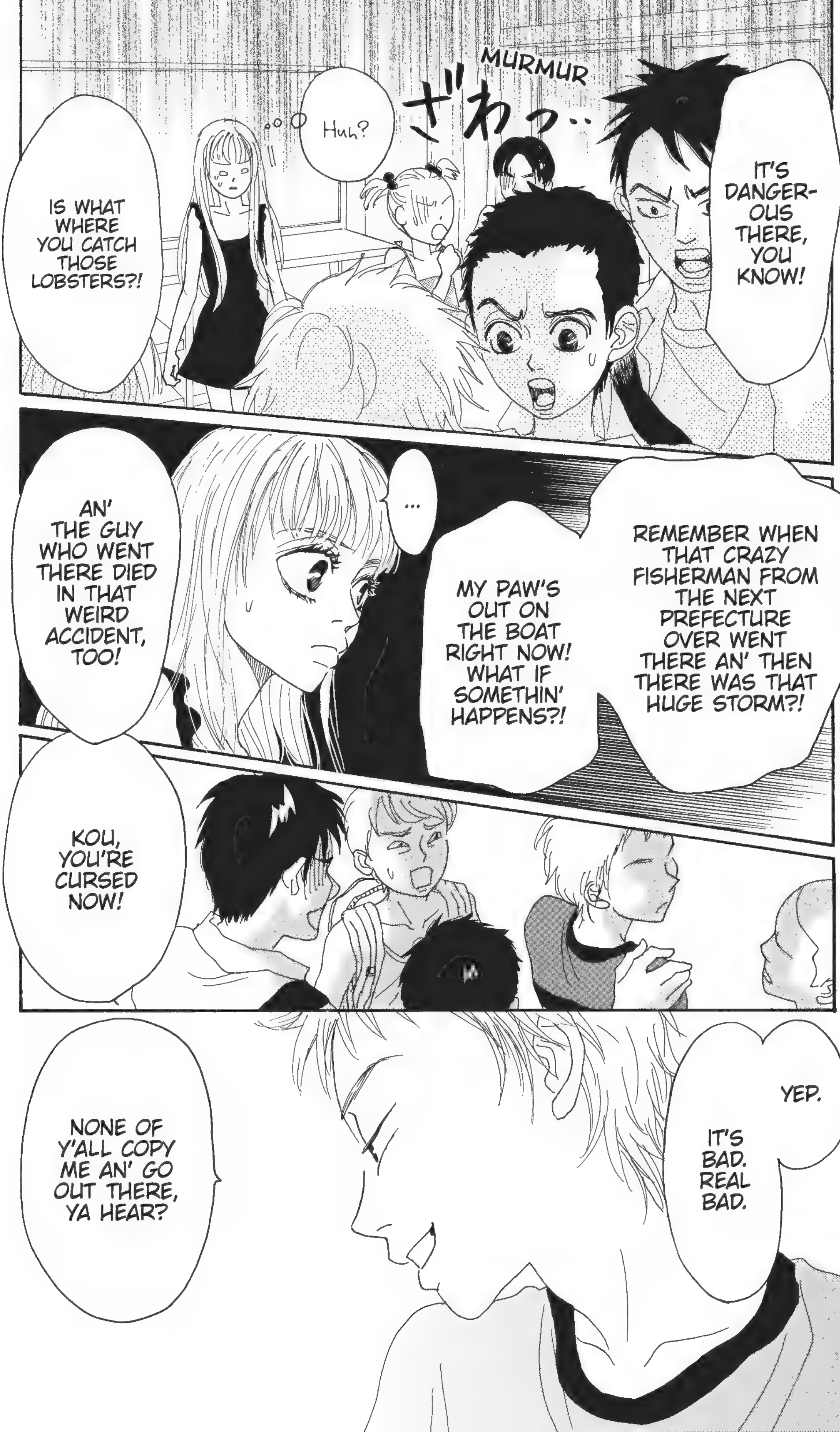

YEAH, THAT'S IT.
HE MUST'VE BEEN IN JUNIOR HIGH.
HEY!
IS IT TRUE YOU'RE IN MAGAZINES AND SUCH?
WHAP ばしっ
HERE, LOOK!
PLUM
WHOA! AMAZIN'!
CHATTER
HEY! LEMME SEE!
CHATTER わら
WELL? AIN'T SHE GREAT?
AH HA HA...
I QUIT MODELING, THOUGH.
WHAT?!
THAT'S NO FUN.
S... sorry.
NOTHIN' TO APOLOGIZE FOR.
BUT WHY'D YA QUIT?
HE SEEMS POPULAR. MAYBE HE'S "KOU-CHAN"?
LIKE I SAID, IT'S TOO FAR TO GET TO TOKYO AN' BACK! TOO BAD, THOUGH.

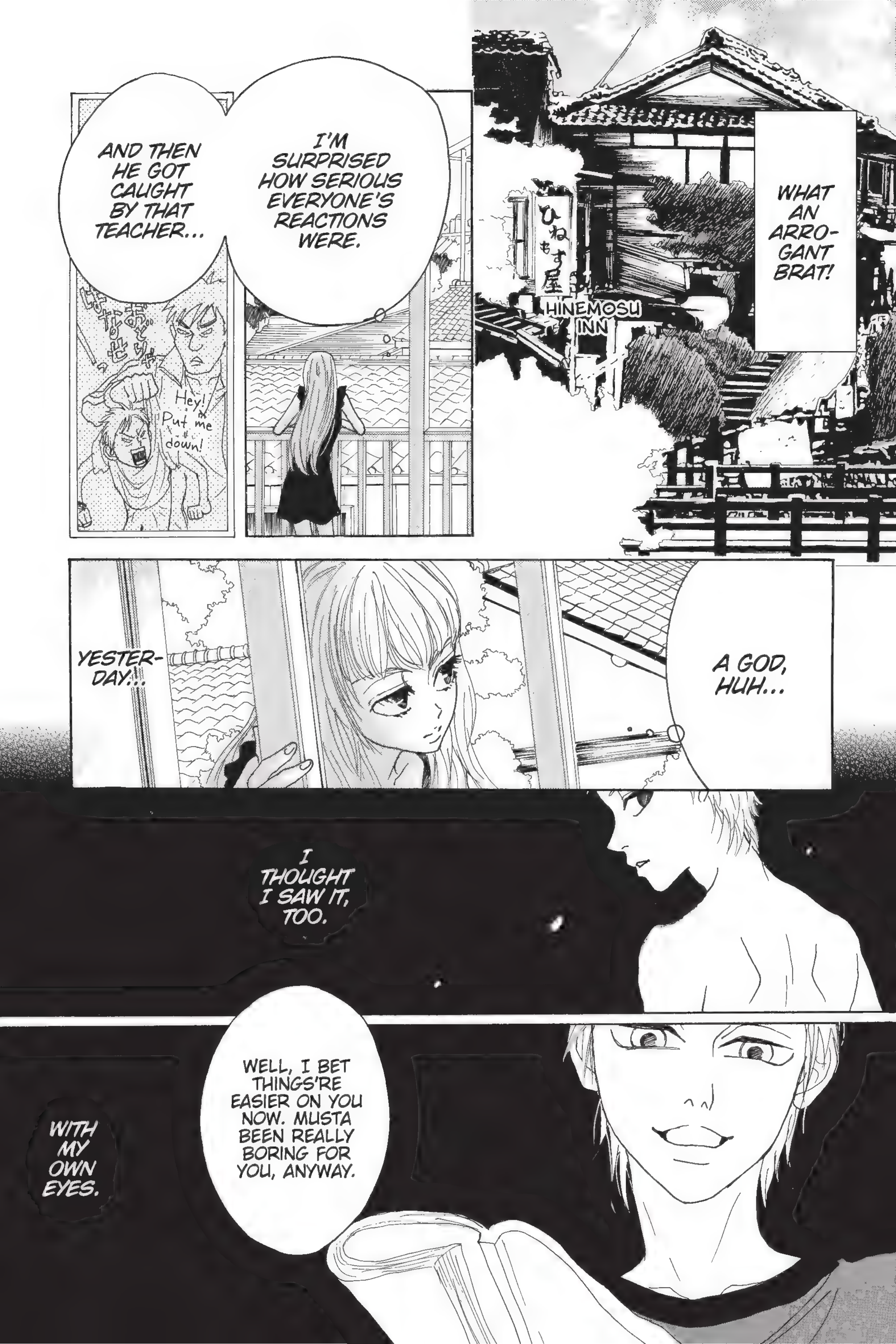

RUSTLE
IT'S AN EXCUSE TO GET RID OF YOU.
WELL, I BET THINGS'RE EASIER ON YOU NOW.
MUSTA BEEN REALLY BORING FOR YOU, ANYWAY.

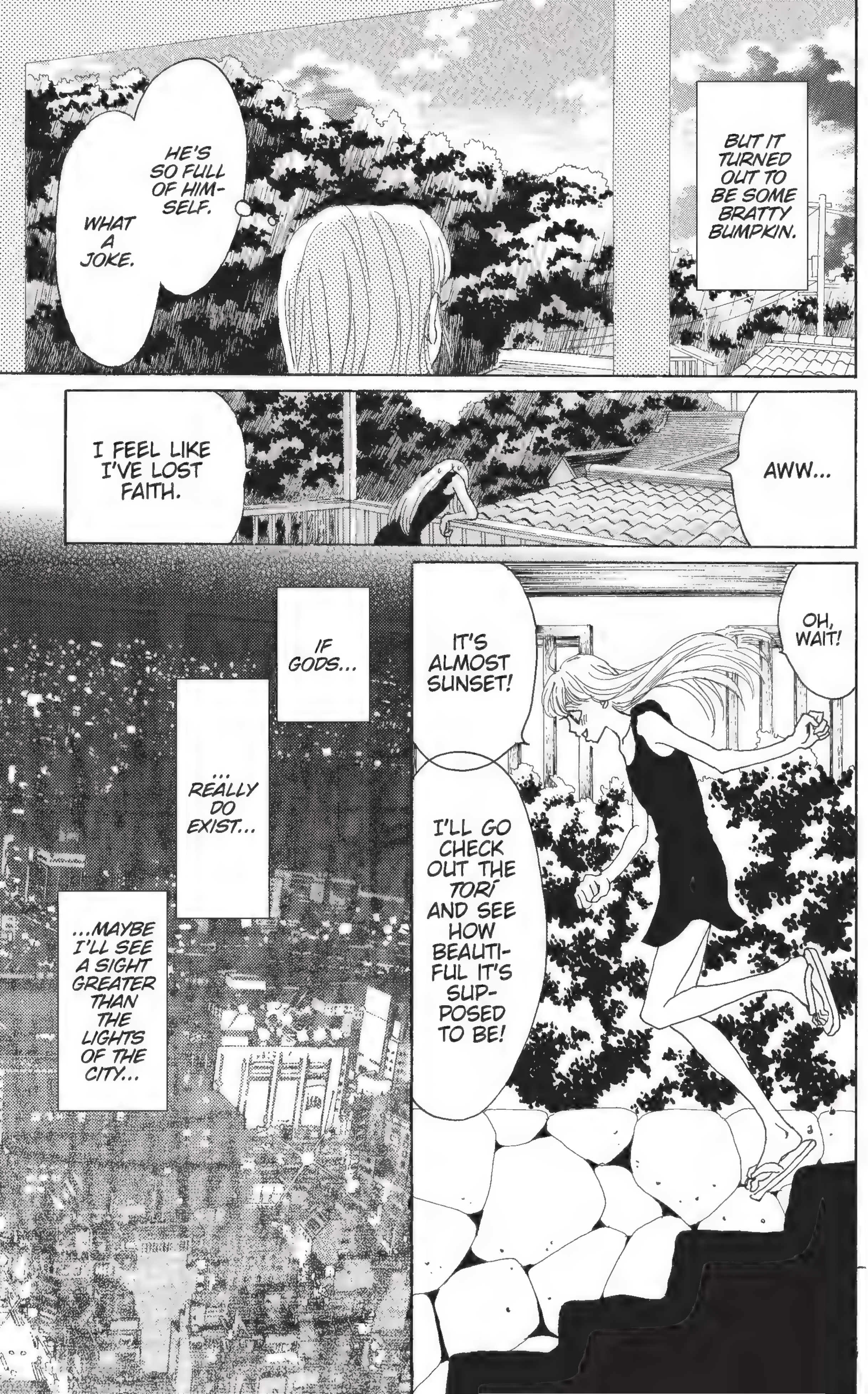

RIGHT?
KOU!
WHAT THE HELL, DUDE? YOU MISSED THE OPENING CEREMONY AND AFTERNOON HOMEROOM!
YOU COMIN' OVER?
WE CAN CONTINUE FROM YESTERDAY.
YEAH.
IT'S WHY I CAME.
RUSTLE
バサッ
JUST ONE MINUTE, KOU-CHAN!

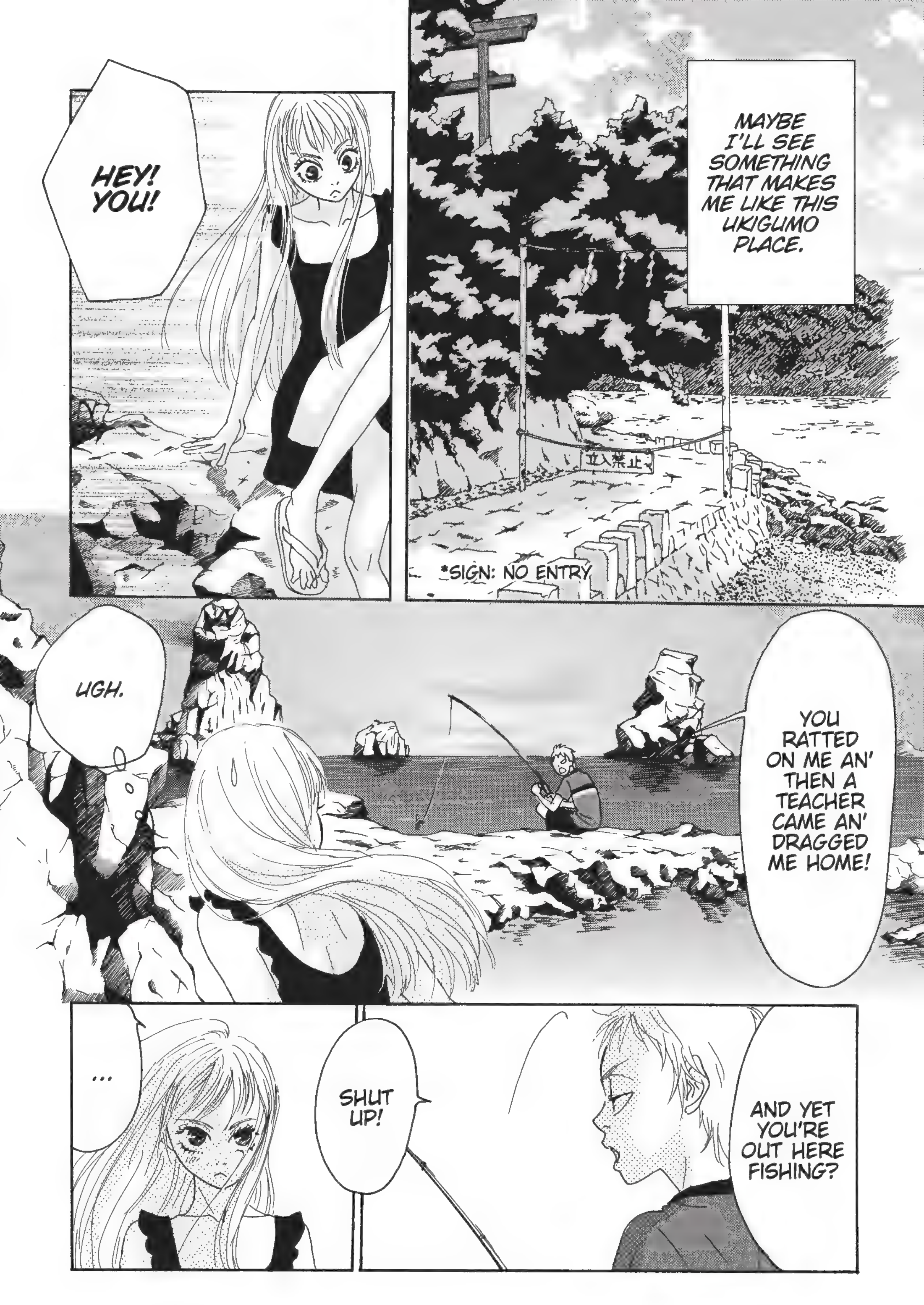

YOU'RE BEIN' RUDE TO NATSUME-CHAN, AIN'TCHA?!
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT!
HE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR YOU AN' YOUR FRIENDS, HAYASE!
LET'S LEAVE THIS HYSTERICAL GAL AND SPLIT.
HYSTERICAL HAYASE!
HAW!
HAW!
HAW!
WHADDAYA MEAN, HYSTERICAL?!

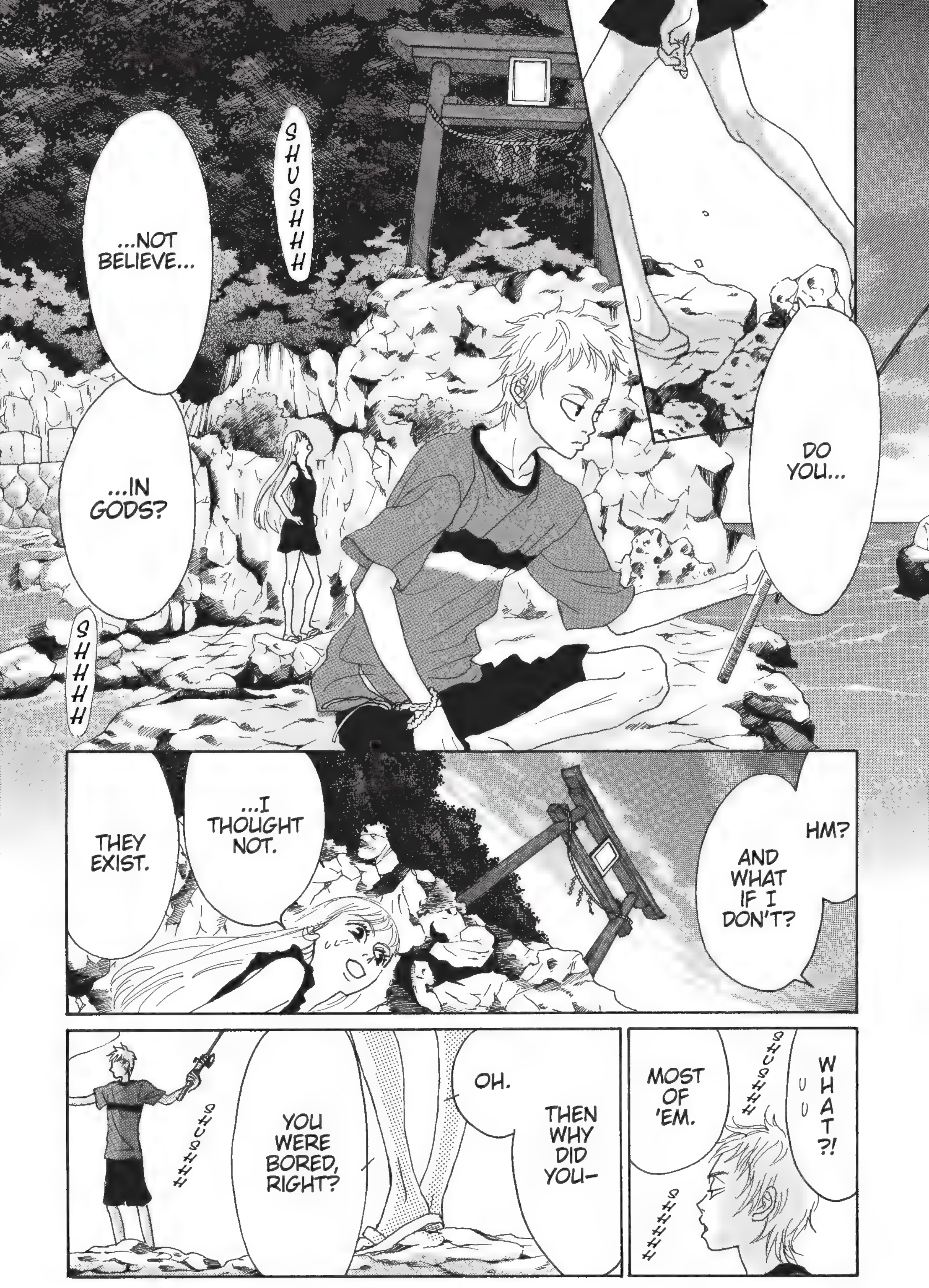

HEY.
THANKS FOR THE LOBSTER.
BUT THAT PLACE WITH THE *TORÍ* GATE...
...YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO GO IN THE WATER, RIGHT?
"DON'T SAY A WORD."
A GOD LIVES THERE, RIGHT?
...
WHAT?!

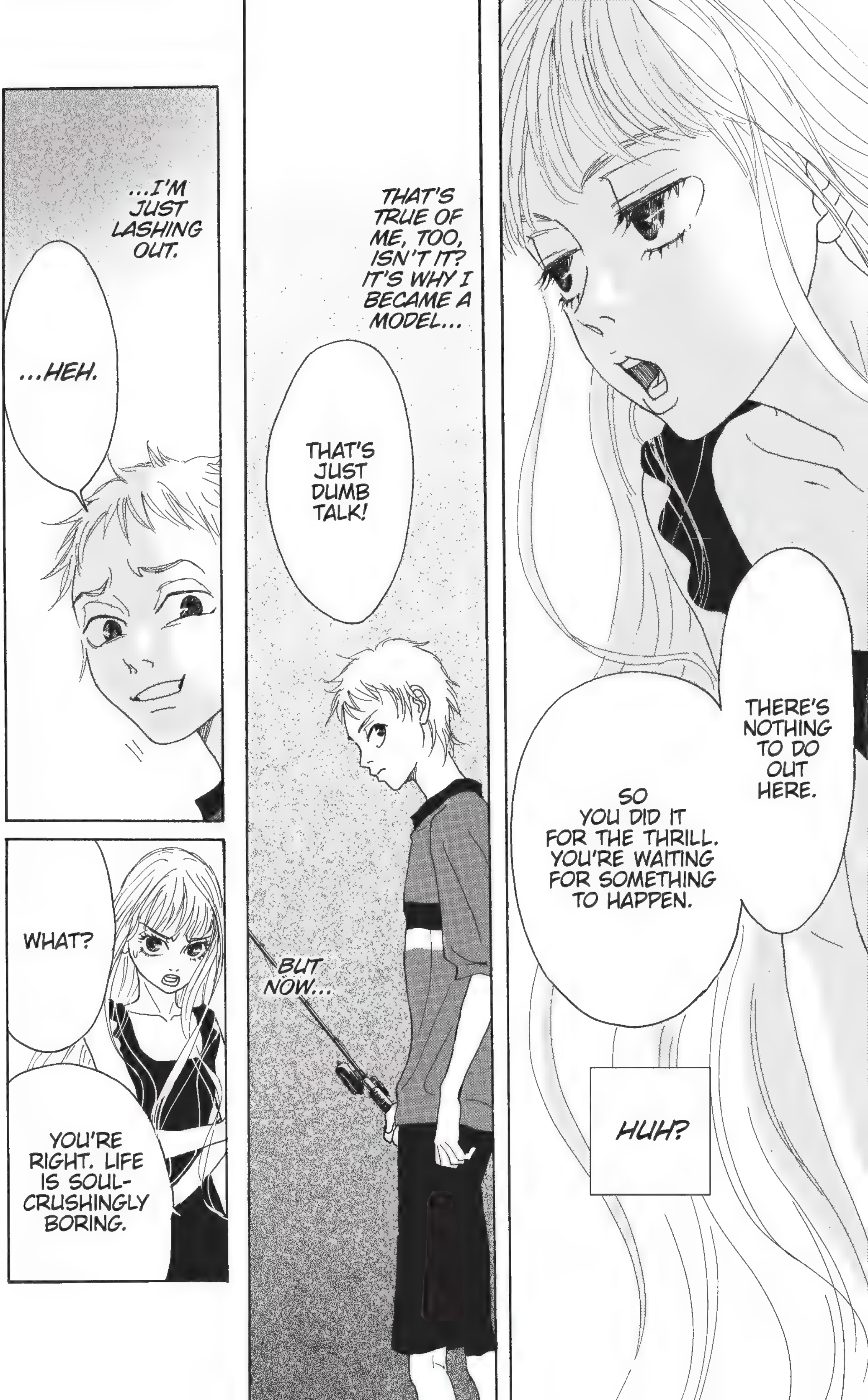

MURMUR
ざわっ..
IT'S DANGEROUS THERE, YOU KNOW!
Huh?
IS WHAT WHERE YOU CATCH THOSE LOBSTERS?!
REMEMBER WHEN THAT CRAZY FISHERMAN FROM THE NEXT PREFECTURE OVER WENT THERE AN' THEN THERE WAS THAT HUGE STORM?!
MY PAW'S OUT ON THE BOAT RIGHT NOW! WHAT IF SOMETHIN' HAPPENS?!
...
AN' THE GUY WHO WENT THERE DIED IN THAT WEIRD ACCIDENT, TOO!
KOU, YOU'RE CURSED NOW!
YEP.
IT'S BAD. REAL BAD.
NONE OF Y'ALL COPY ME AN' GO OUT THERE, YA HEAR?

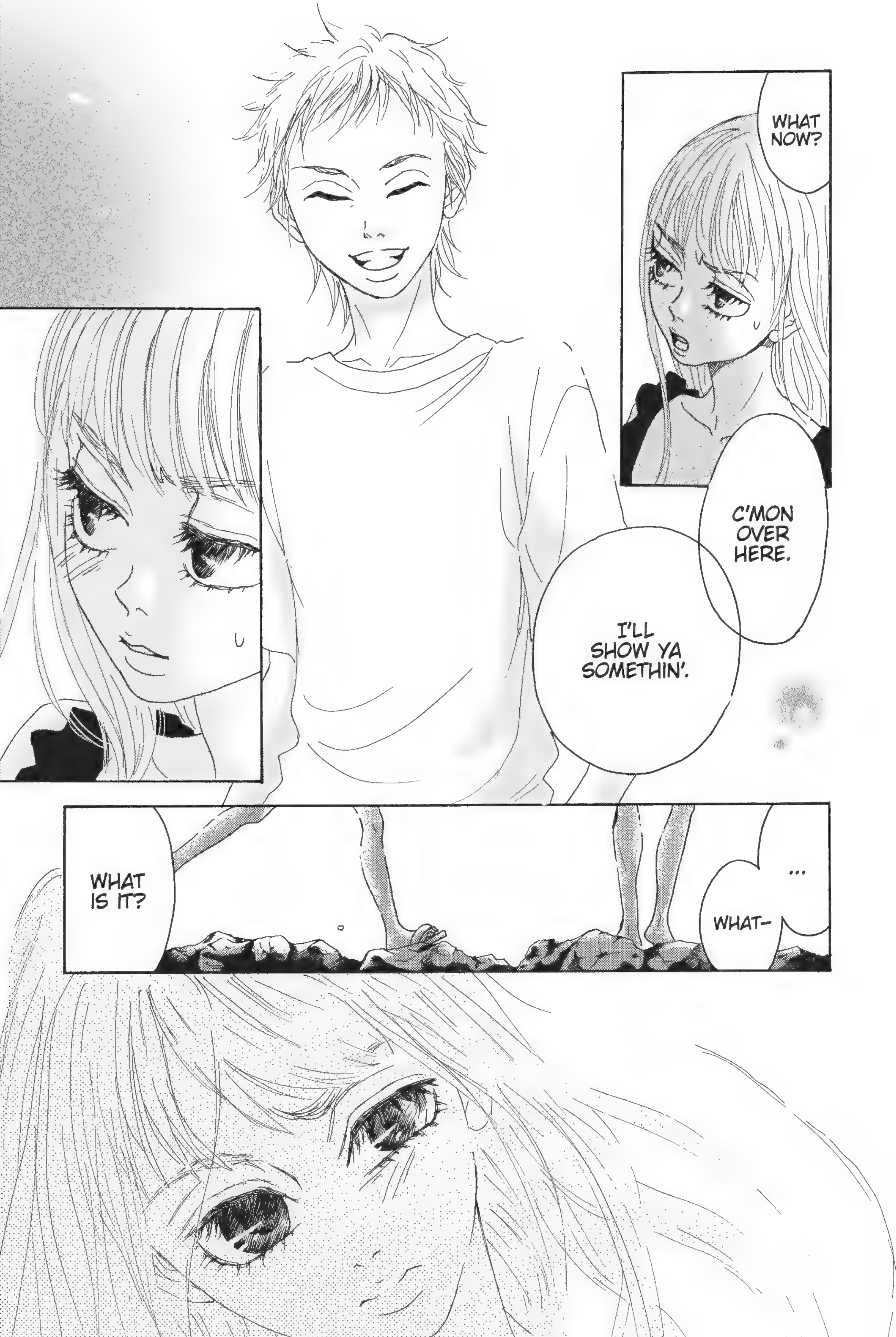

WHAT AN ARROGANT BRAT!
ひねもす屋
HINEMOSU INN
I'M SURPRISED HOW SERIOUS EVERYONE'S REACTIONS WERE.
AND THEN HE GOT CAUGHT BY THAT TEACHER...
おどせや
はなせっ
Hey! Put me down!
A GOD, HUH...
YESTERDAY...
I THOUGHT I SAW IT, TOO.
WELL, I BET THINGS'RE EASIER ON YOU NOW. MUSTA BEEN REALLY BORING FOR YOU, ANYWAY.
WITH MY OWN EYES.


BUT IT TURNED OUT TO BE SOME BRATTY BUMPKIN.
HE'S SO FULL OF HIMSELF.
WHAT A JOKE.
AWW...
I FEEL LIKE I'VE LOST FAITH.
OH, WAIT!
IT'S ALMOST SUNSET!
I'LL GO CHECK OUT THE *TORÍ* AND SEE HOW BEAUTIFUL IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE!
IF GODS...
...REALLY DO EXIST...
...MAYBE I'LL SEE A SIGHT GREATER THAN THE LIGHTS OF THE CITY...

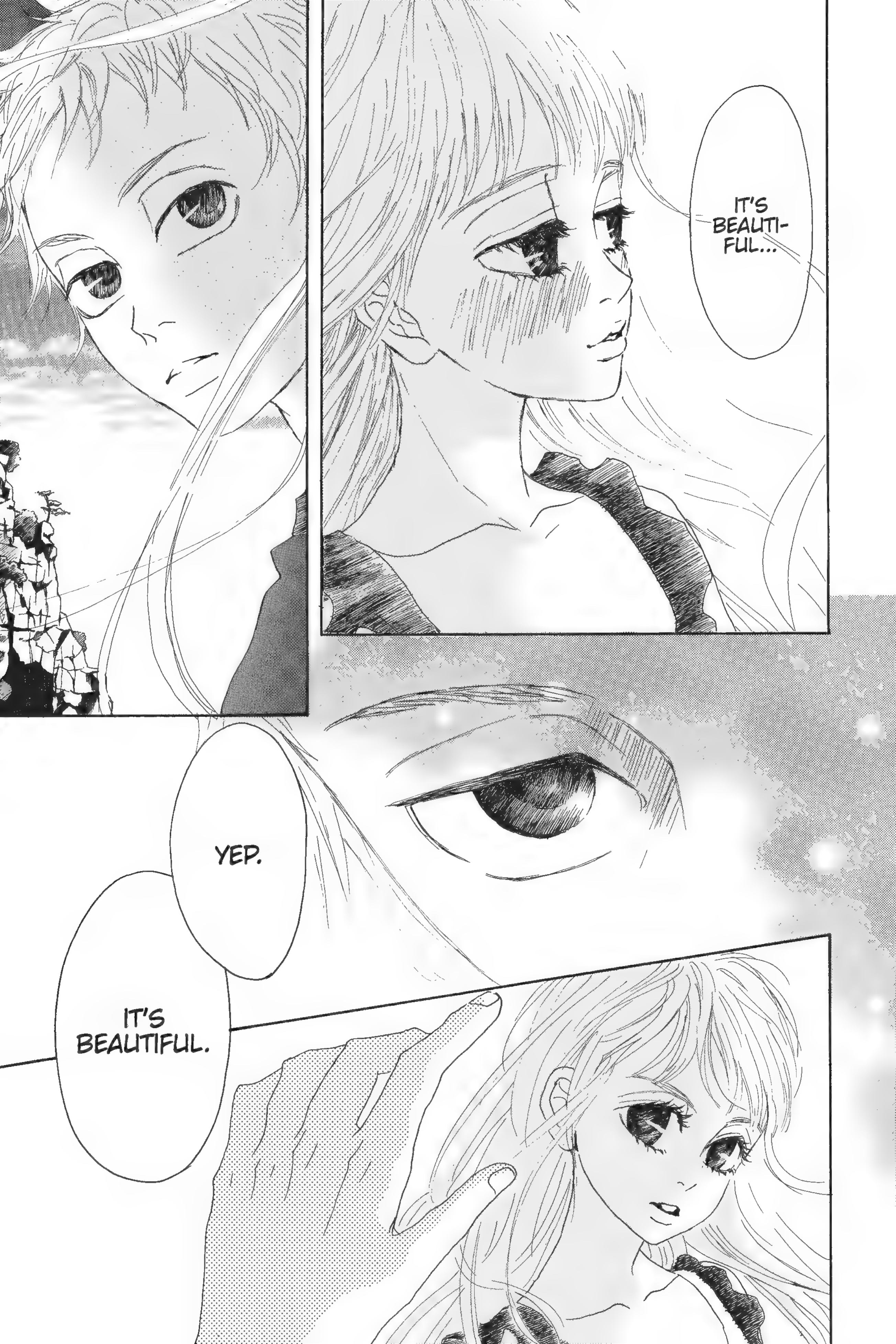

MAYBE I'LL SEE SOMETHING THAT MAKES ME LIKE THIS UKIGUMO PLACE.
立入禁止
*SIGN: NO ENTRY
HEY! YOU!
YOU RATTED ON ME AN' THEN A TEACHER CAME AN' DRAGGED ME HOME!
UGH.
AND YET YOU'RE OUT HERE FISHING?
SHUT UP!
...

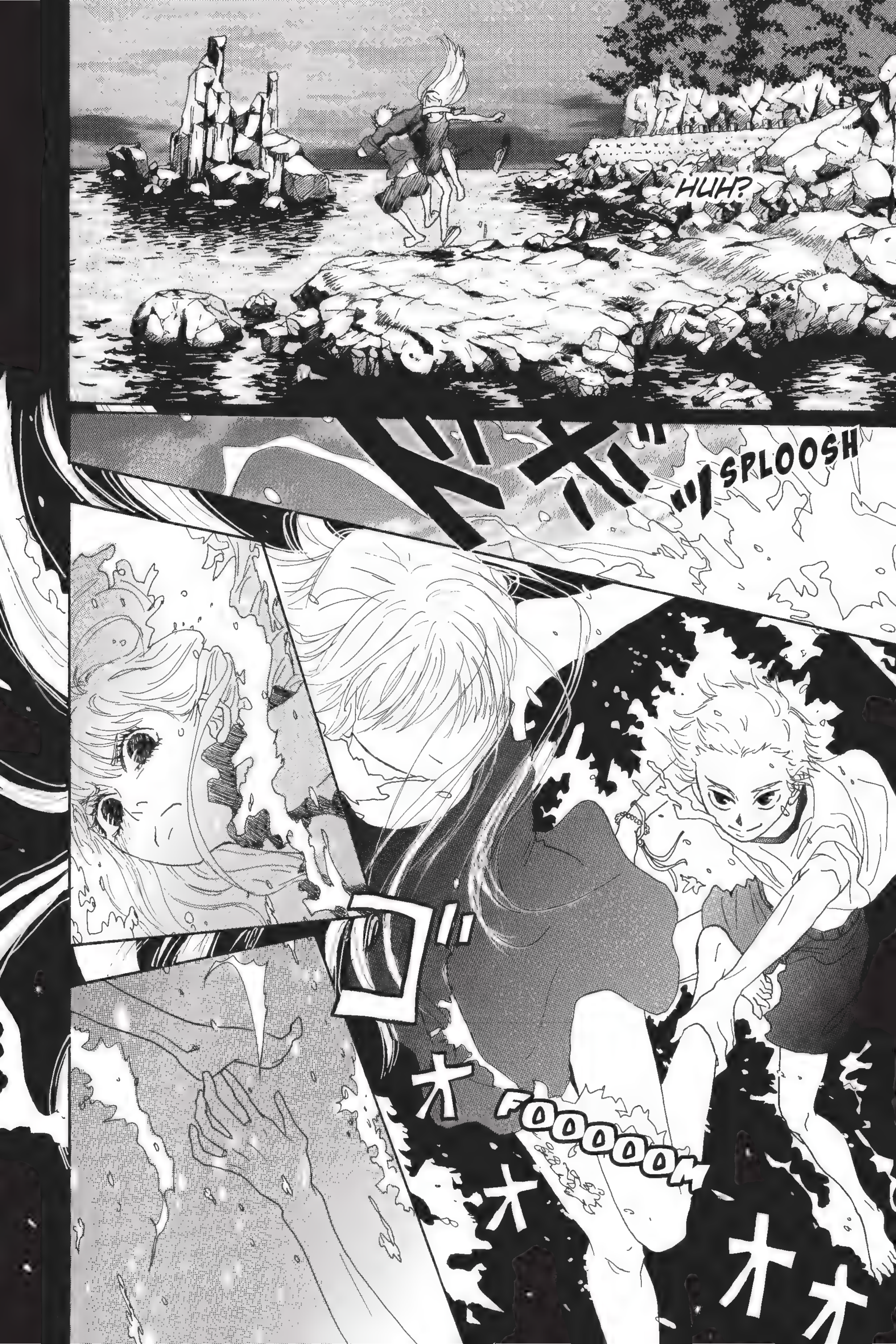

DO YOU...
...NOT BELIEVE...
...IN GODS?
SHUSHHH
SHHHH
HM?
AND WHAT IF I DON'T?
...I THOUGHT NOT.
THEY EXIST.
WHAT?!
MOST OF 'EM.
SHUSHHH
SHHHHH
OH.
THEN WHY DID YOU-
YOU WERE BORED, RIGHT?
SHUSHHH

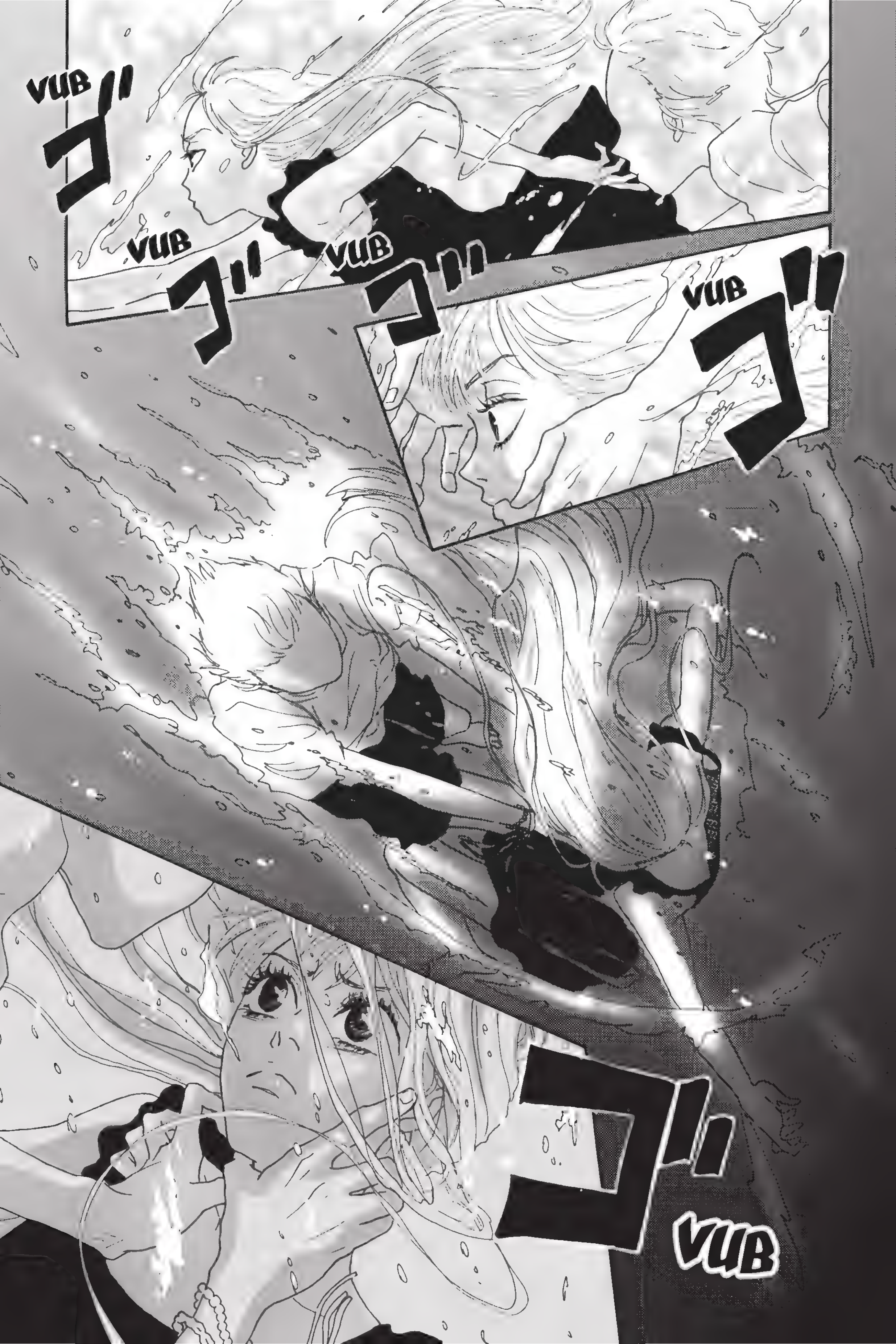

THERE'S NOTHING TO DO OUT HERE.
SO YOU DID IT FOR THE THRILL. YOU'RE WAITING FOR SOMETHING TO HAPPEN.
HUH?
THAT'S TRUE OF ME, TOO, ISN'T IT? IT'S WHY I BECAME A MODEL...
THAT'S JUST DUMB TALK!
BUT NOW...
...I'M JUST LASHING OUT.
...HEH.
WHAT?
YOU'RE RIGHT. LIFE IS SOUL-CRUSHINGLY BORING.

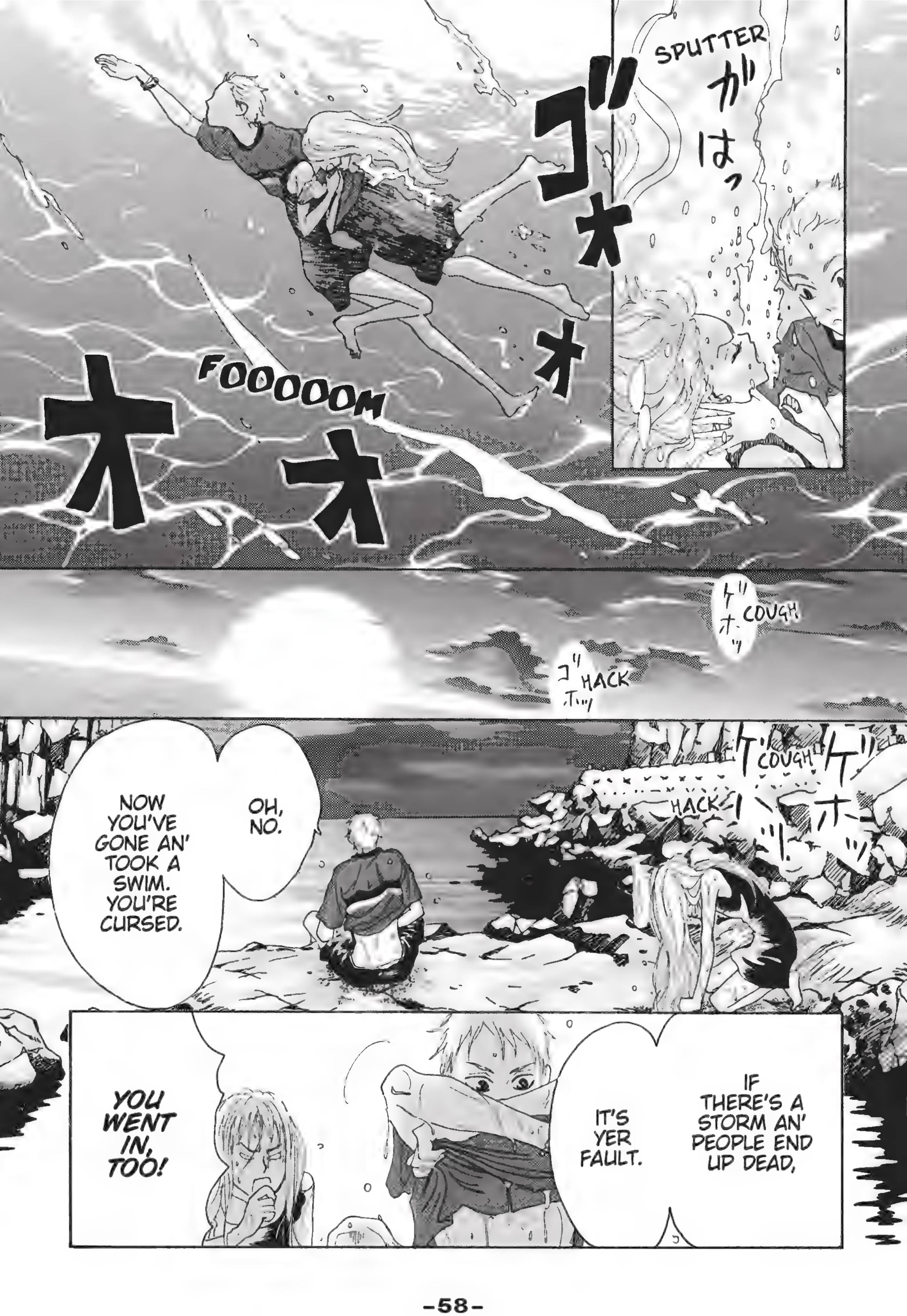

WHAT NOW?
C'MON OVER HERE.
I'LL SHOW YA SOMETHIN'.
... WHAT-
WHAT IS IT?

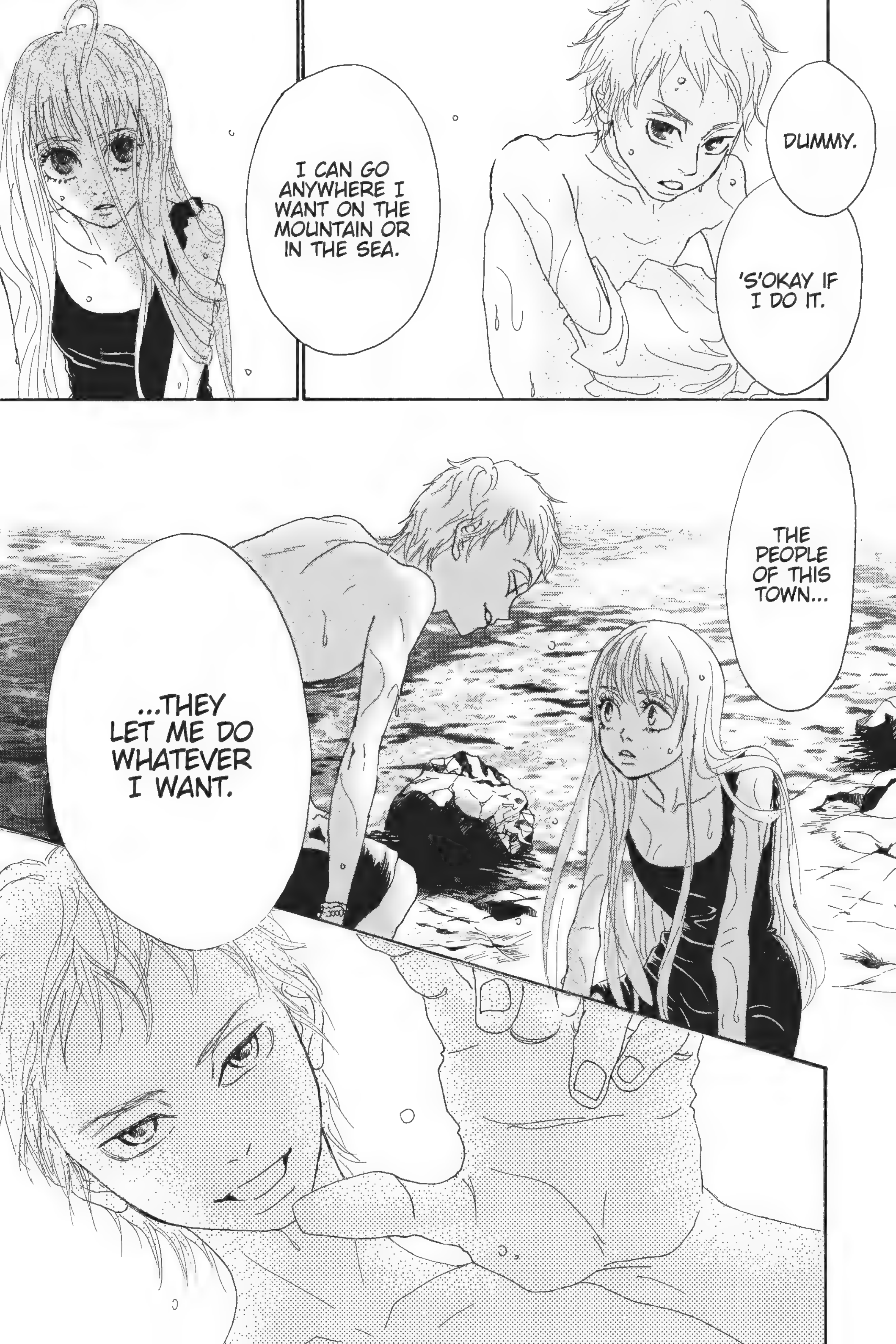
AH!
WOW...

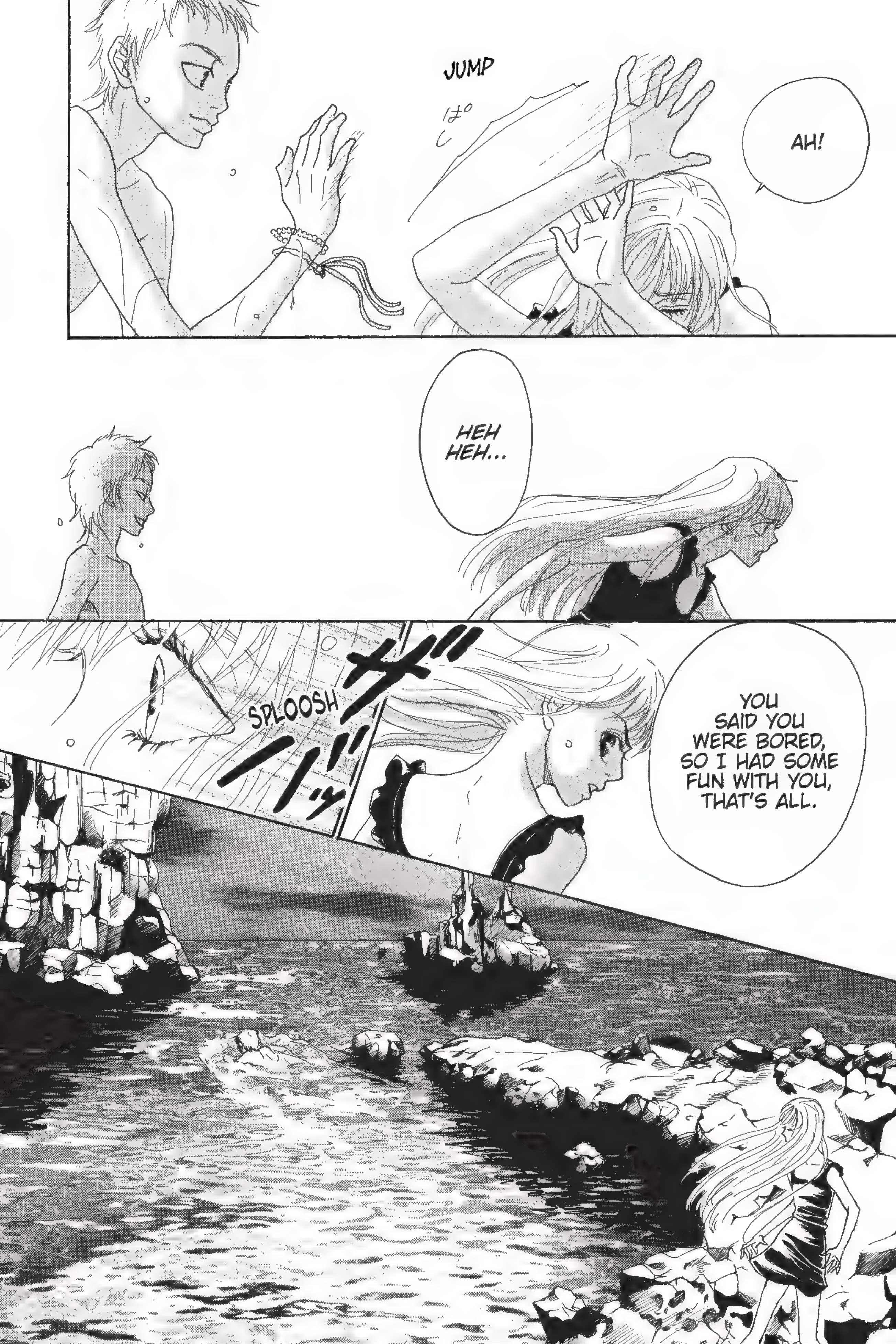

IT'S BEAUTIFUL...
YEP.
IT'S BEAUTIFUL.

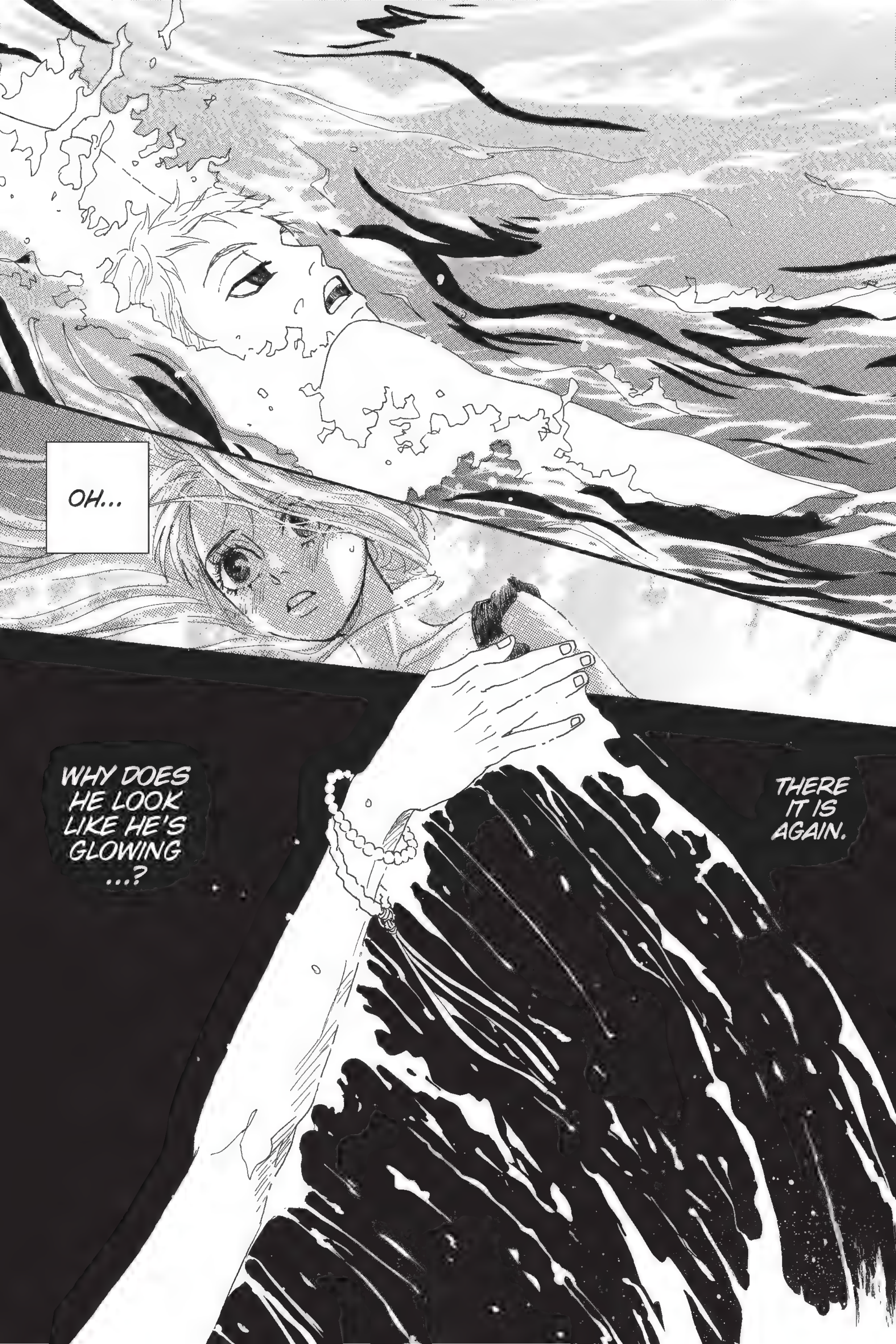

HUH?
ドボッ
SPLOOSH
ゴオオオオ
FOOOOOOM

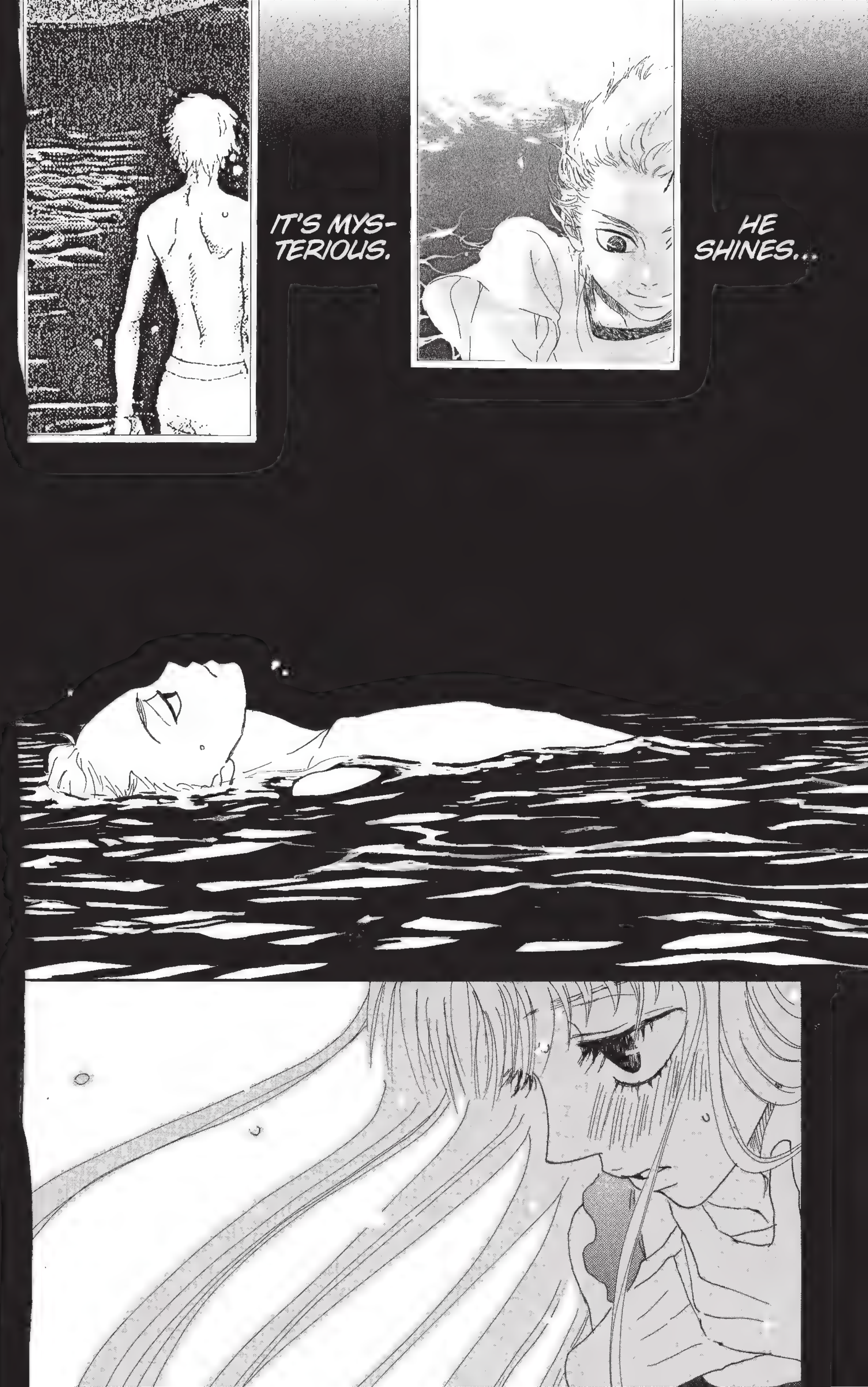

VUB
ゴ
VUB
ゴ
VUB
ゴ
VUB
ゴ
VUB
ゴ
ゴ
VUB

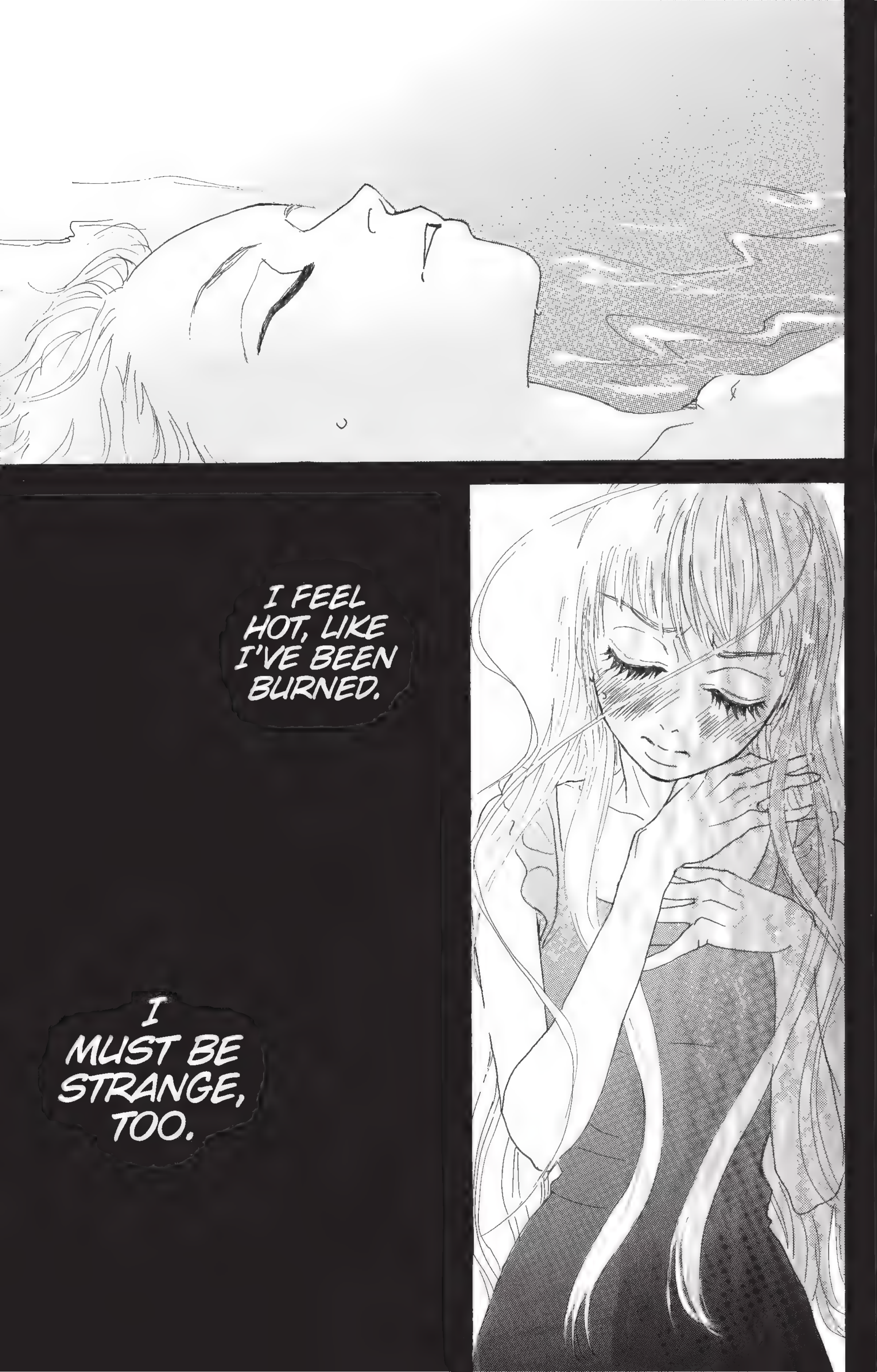

SPUTTER
がはっ
ゴオオオオ
FOOOOOM
ゲホッ
COUGH!
ゴホッ
HACK
ゲホッ
COUGH!
ゲホーッ
HACK
OH, NO.
NOW YOU'VE GONE AN' TOOK A SWIM. YOU'RE CURSED.
IF THERE'S A STORM AN' PEOPLE END UP DEAD,
IT'S YER FAULT.
YOU WENT IN, TOO!


DUMMY.
'S'OKAY IF I DO IT.
I CAN GO ANYWHERE I WANT ON THE MOUNTAIN OR IN THE SEA.
THE PEOPLE OF THIS TOWN...
...THEY LET ME DO WHATEVER I WANT.


AH!
JUMP
ぱし
HEH HEH...
YOU SAID YOU WERE BORED, SO I HAD SOME FUN WITH YOU, THAT'S ALL.
ザバッ
SPLOOSH

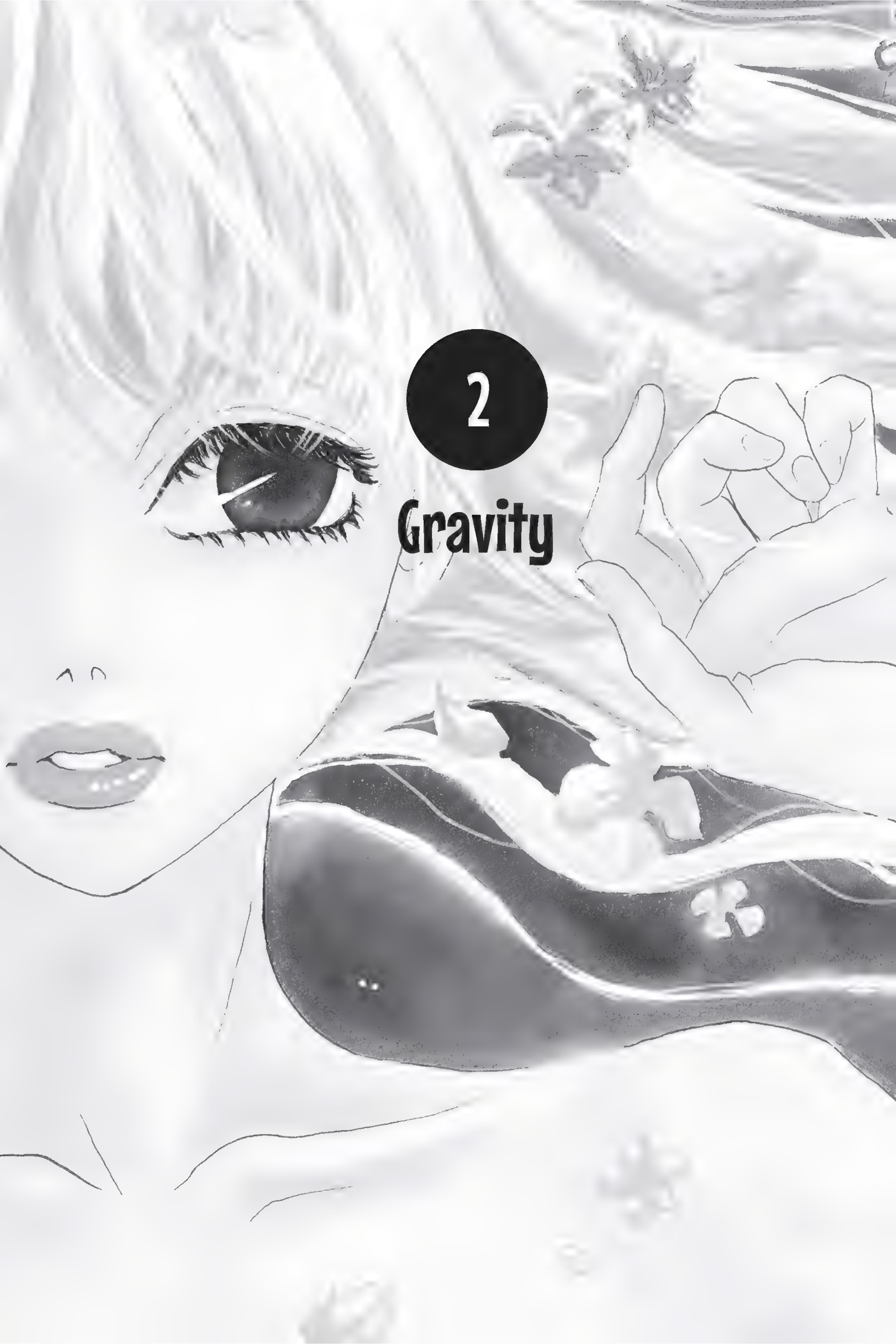

OH...
THERE IT IS AGAIN.
WHY DOES HE LOOK LIKE HE'S GLOWING ...?

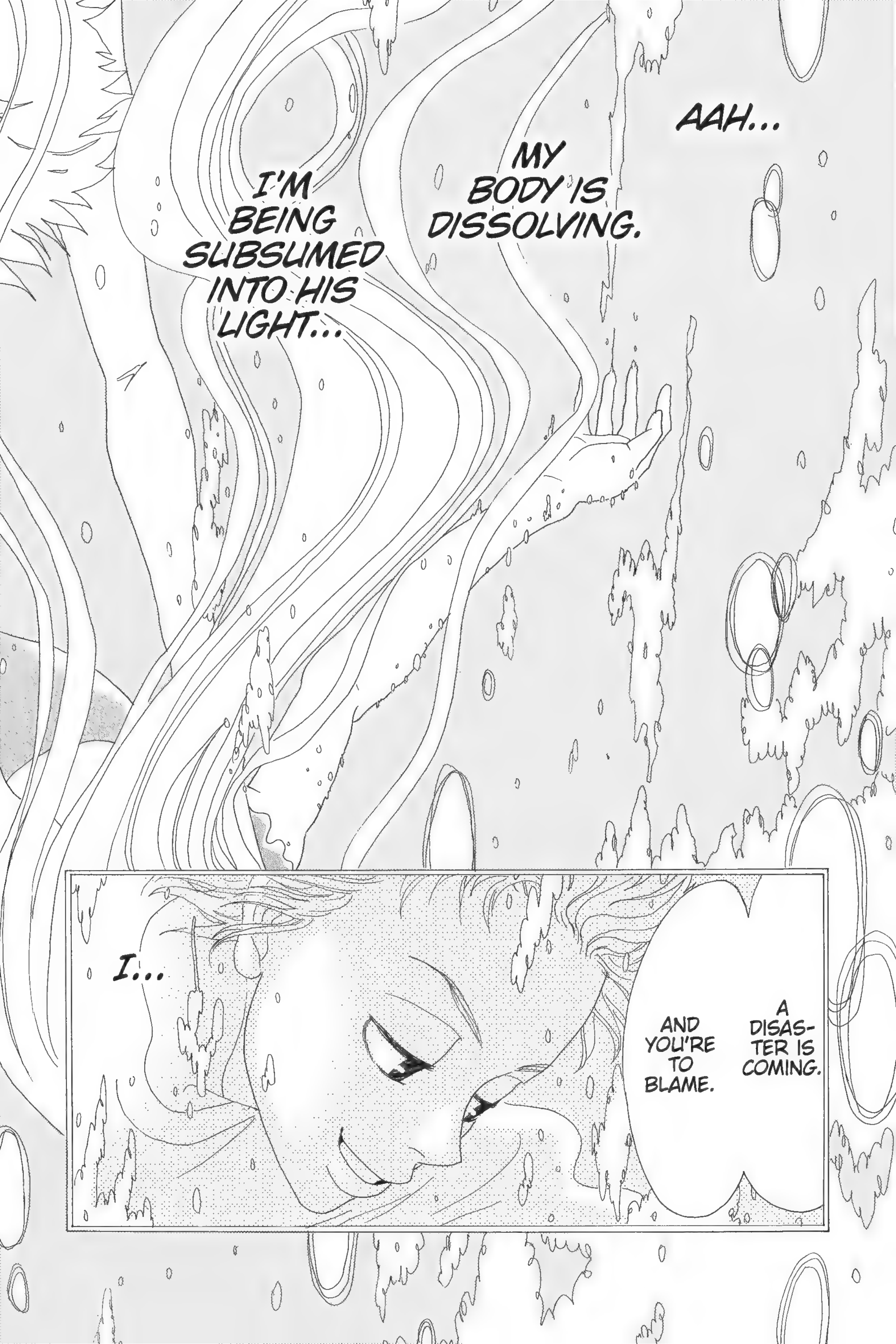

HE SHINES...
IT'S MYSTERIOUS.

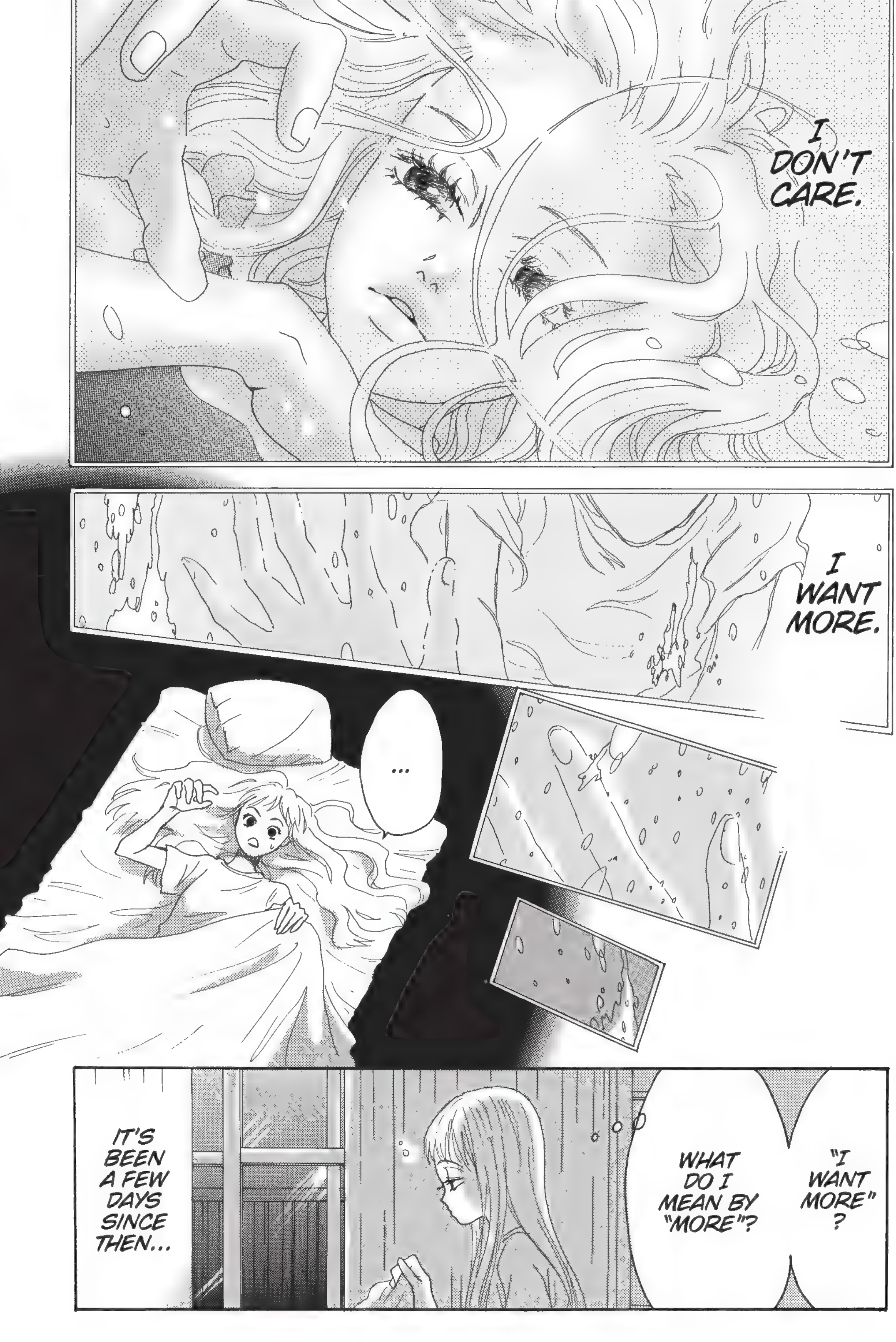

I FEEL HOT, LIKE I'VE BEEN BURNED.
I MUST BE STRANGE, TOO.

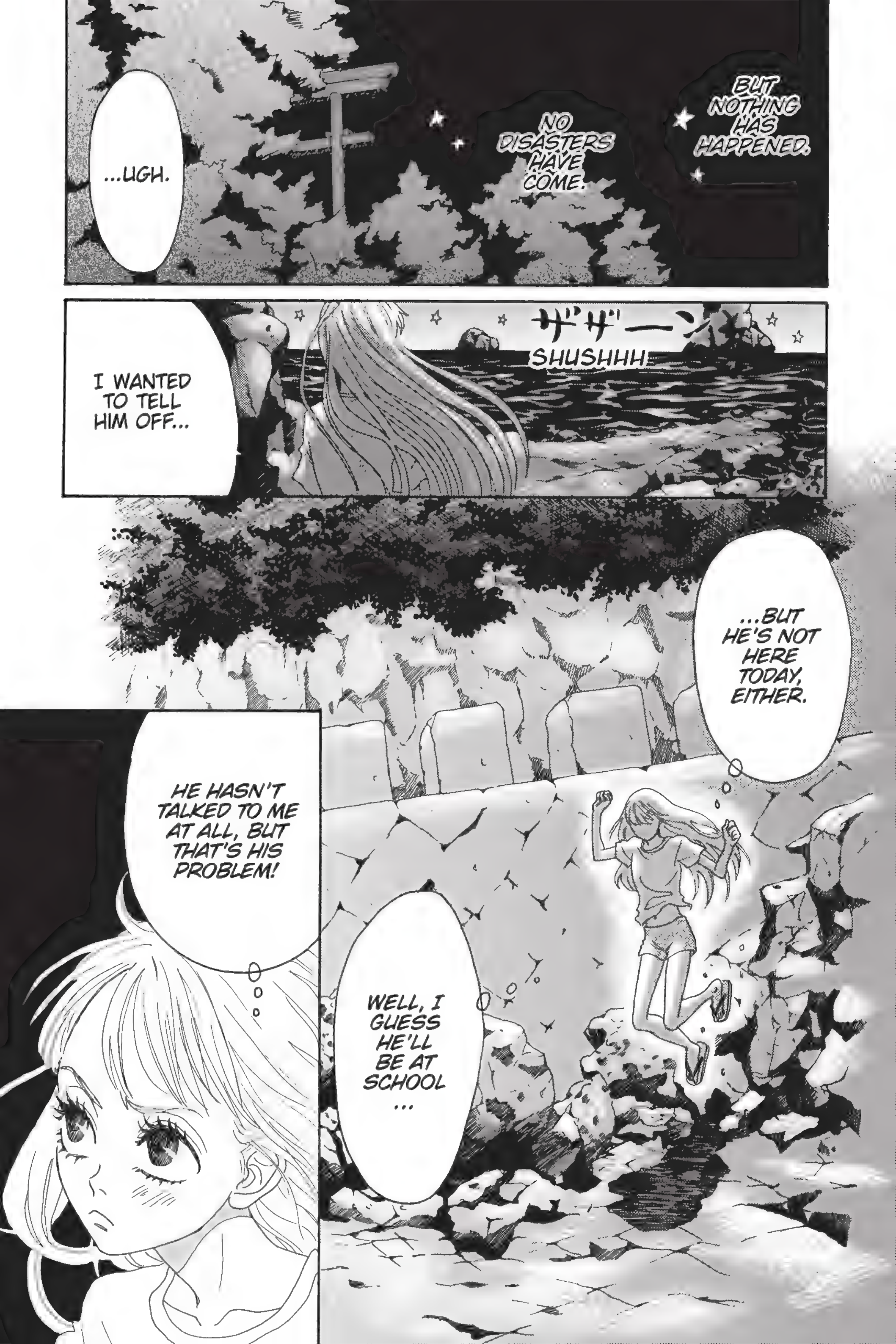
2

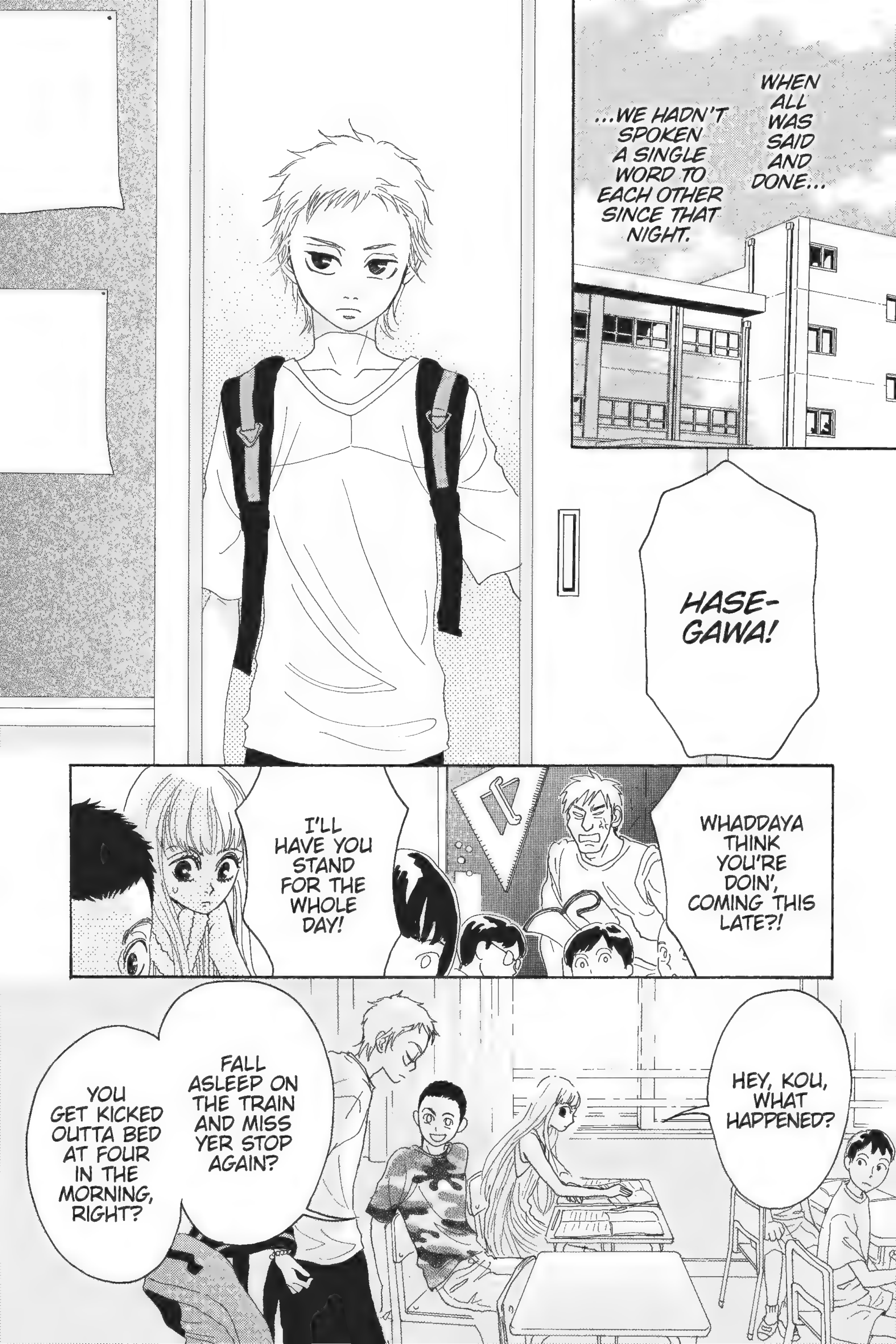
Gravity

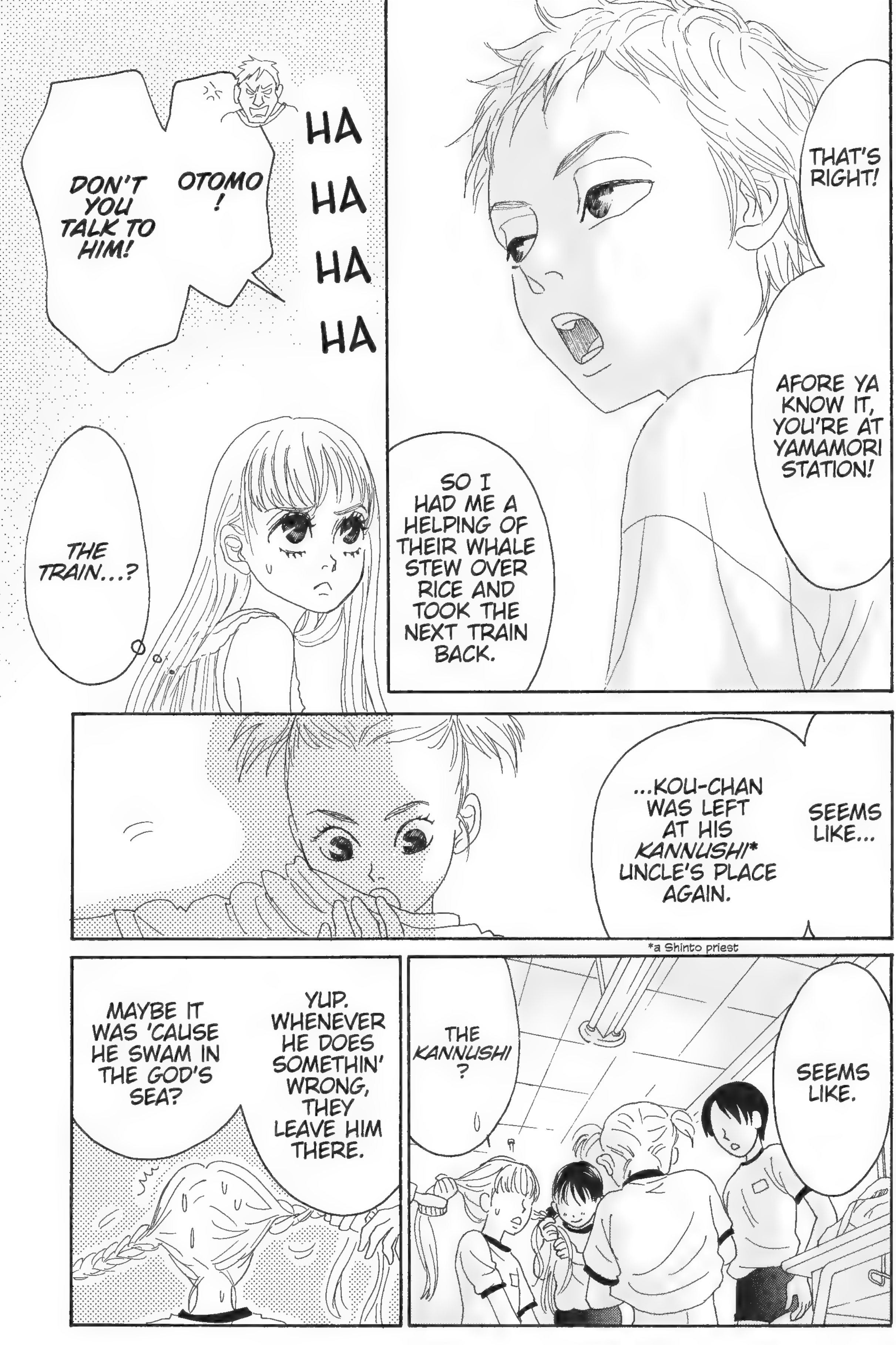



AAH...
MY BODY IS DISSOLVING.
I'M BEING SUBSUMED INTO HIS LIGHT...
A DISASTER IS COMING.
AND YOU'RE TO BLAME.
I...

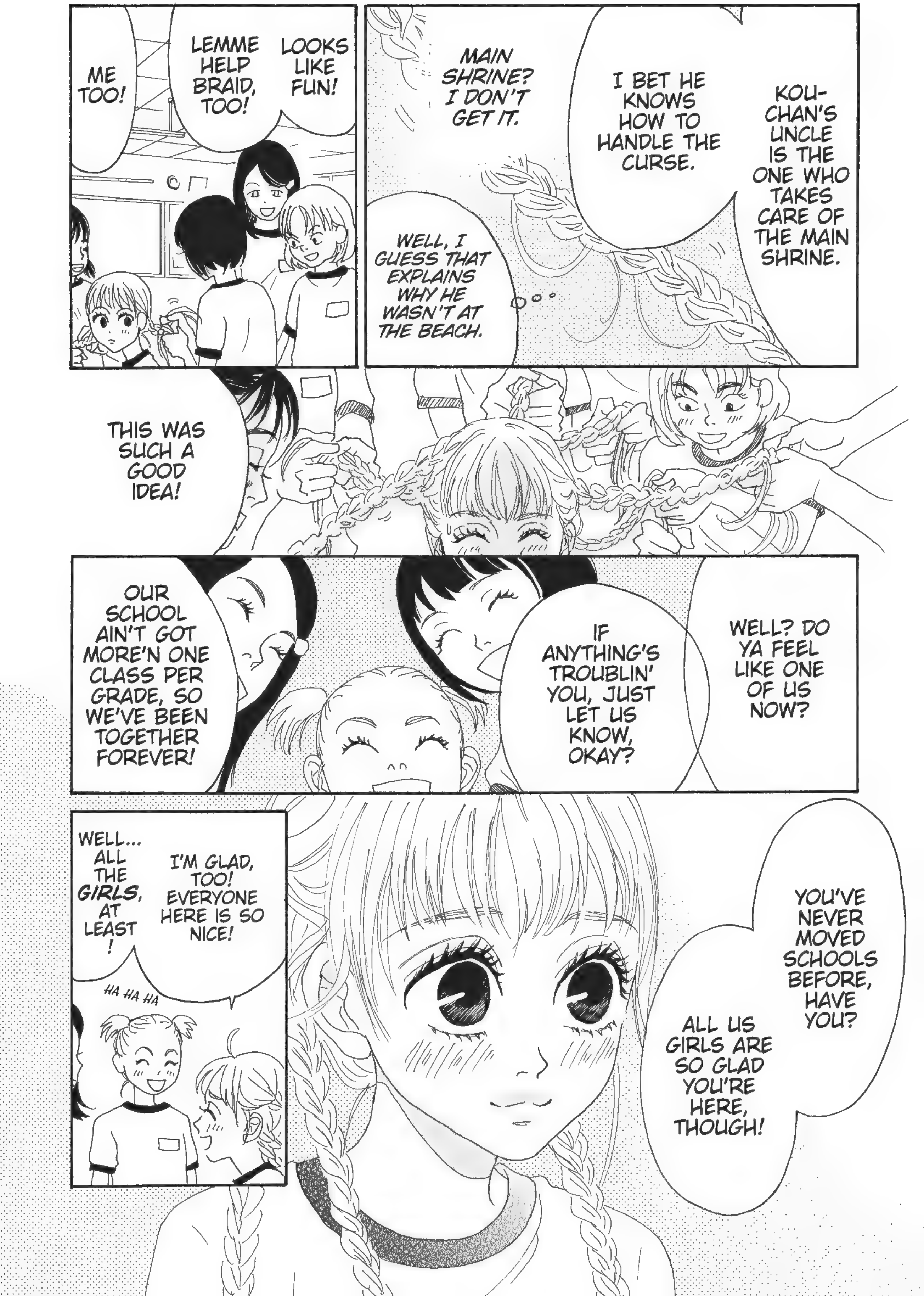

I DON'T CARE.
I WANT MORE.
...
"I WANT MORE"?
WHAT DO I MEAN BY "MORE"?
IT'S BEEN A FEW DAYS SINCE THEN...

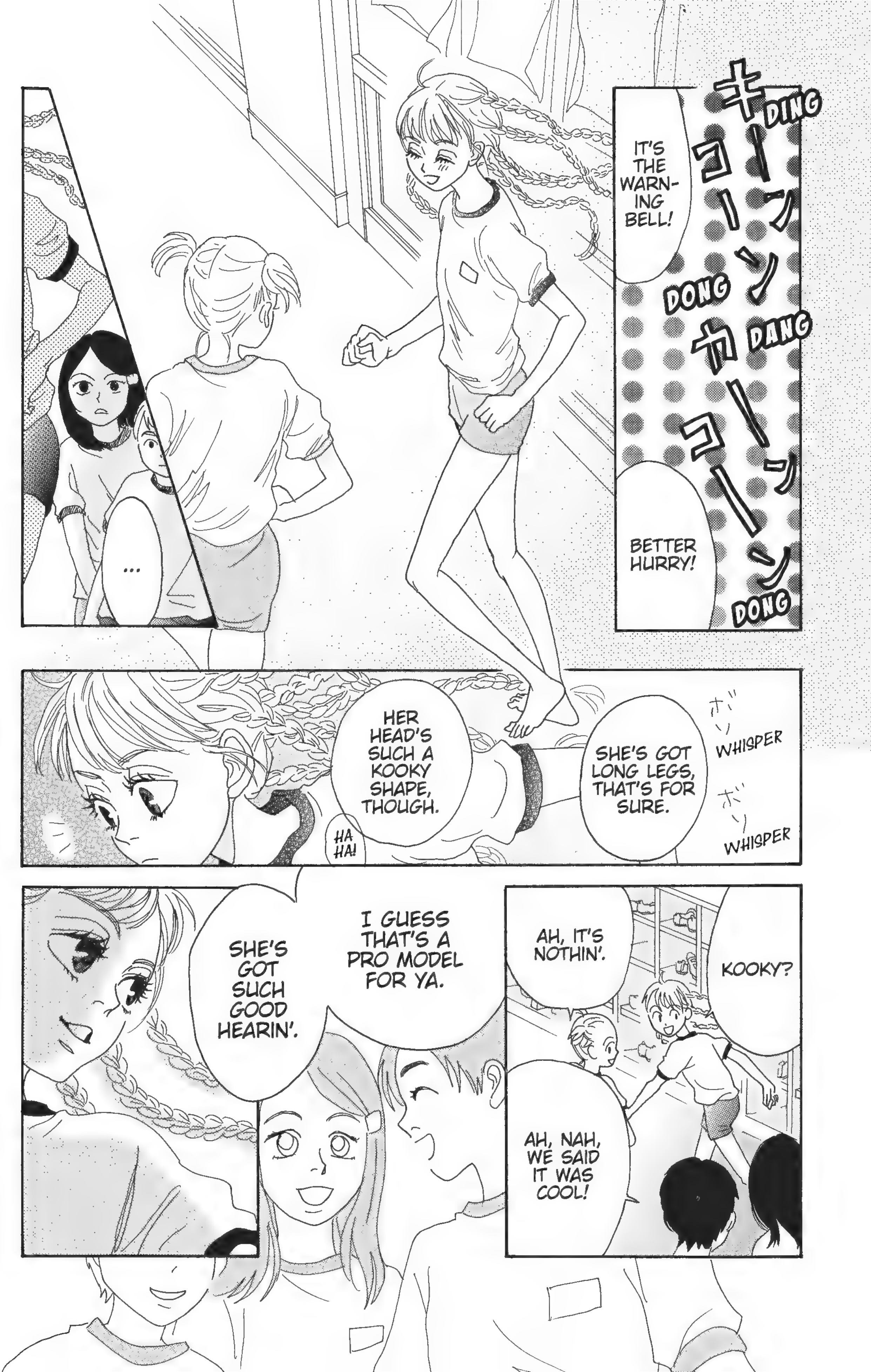

BUT NOTHING HAS HAPPENED.
NO DISASTERS HAVE COME.
...UGH.
ザザーン
SHUSHHH
I WANTED TO TELL HIM OFF...
...BUT HE'S NOT HERE TODAY, EITHER.
WELL, I GUESS HE'LL BE AT SCHOOL...
HE HASN'T TALKED TO ME AT ALL, BUT THAT'S HIS PROBLEM!

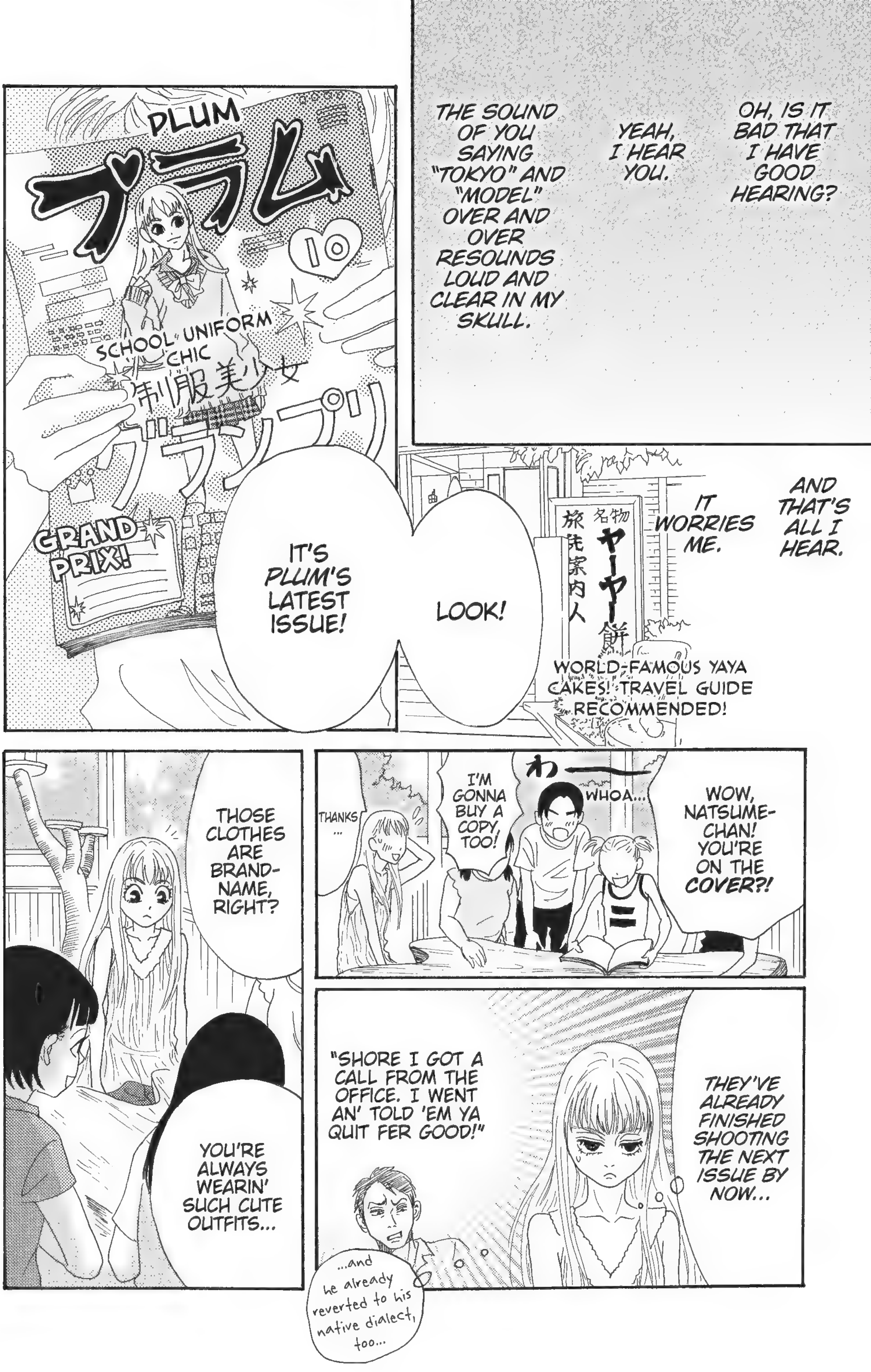

WHEN ALL WAS SAID AND DONE...
...WE HADN'T SPOKEN A SINGLE WORD TO EACH OTHER SINCE THAT NIGHT.
HASE-GAWA!
WHADDAYA THINK YOU'RE DOIN', COMING THIS LATE?!
I'LL HAVE YOU STAND FOR THE WHOLE DAY!
HEY, KOU, WHAT HAPPENED?
FALL ASLEEP ON THE TRAIN AND MISS YER STOP AGAIN?
YOU GET KICKED OUTTA BED AT FOUR IN THE MORNING, RIGHT?

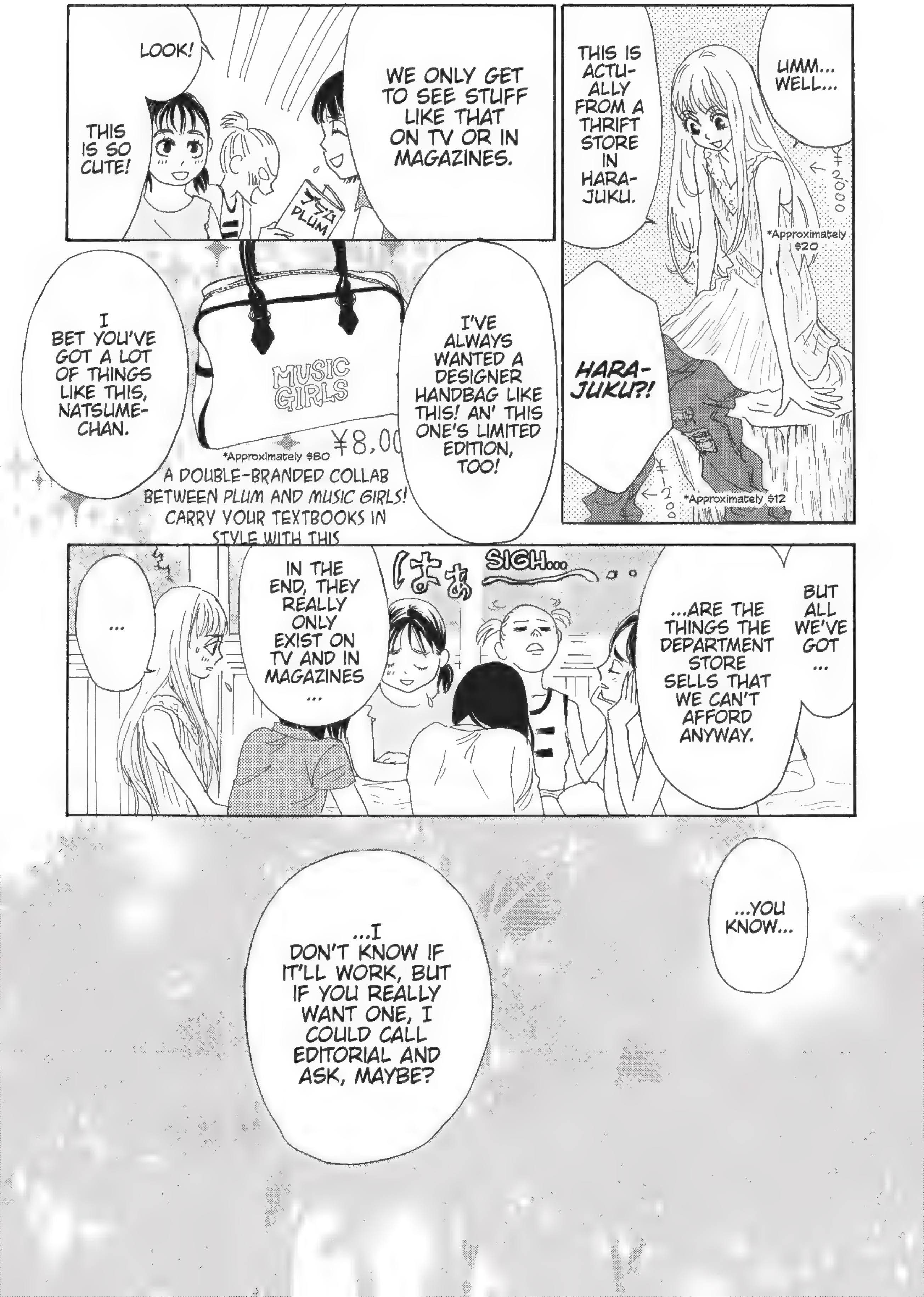

THAT'S RIGHT!
AFORE YA KNOW IT, YOU'RE AT YAMAMORI STATION!
SO I HAD ME A HELPING OF THEIR WHALE STEW OVER RICE AND TOOK THE NEXT TRAIN BACK.
HA HA HA HA
OTOMO!
DON'T YOU TALK TO HIM!
THE TRAIN...?
SEEMS LIKE...
...KOU-CHAN WAS LEFT AT HIS *KANNUSHI** UNCLE'S PLACE AGAIN.
SEEMS LIKE.
THE *KANNUSHI*?
YUP. WHENEVER HE DOES SOMETHIN' WRONG, THEY LEAVE HIM THERE.
MAYBE IT WAS 'CAUSE HE SWAM IN THE GOD'S SEA?

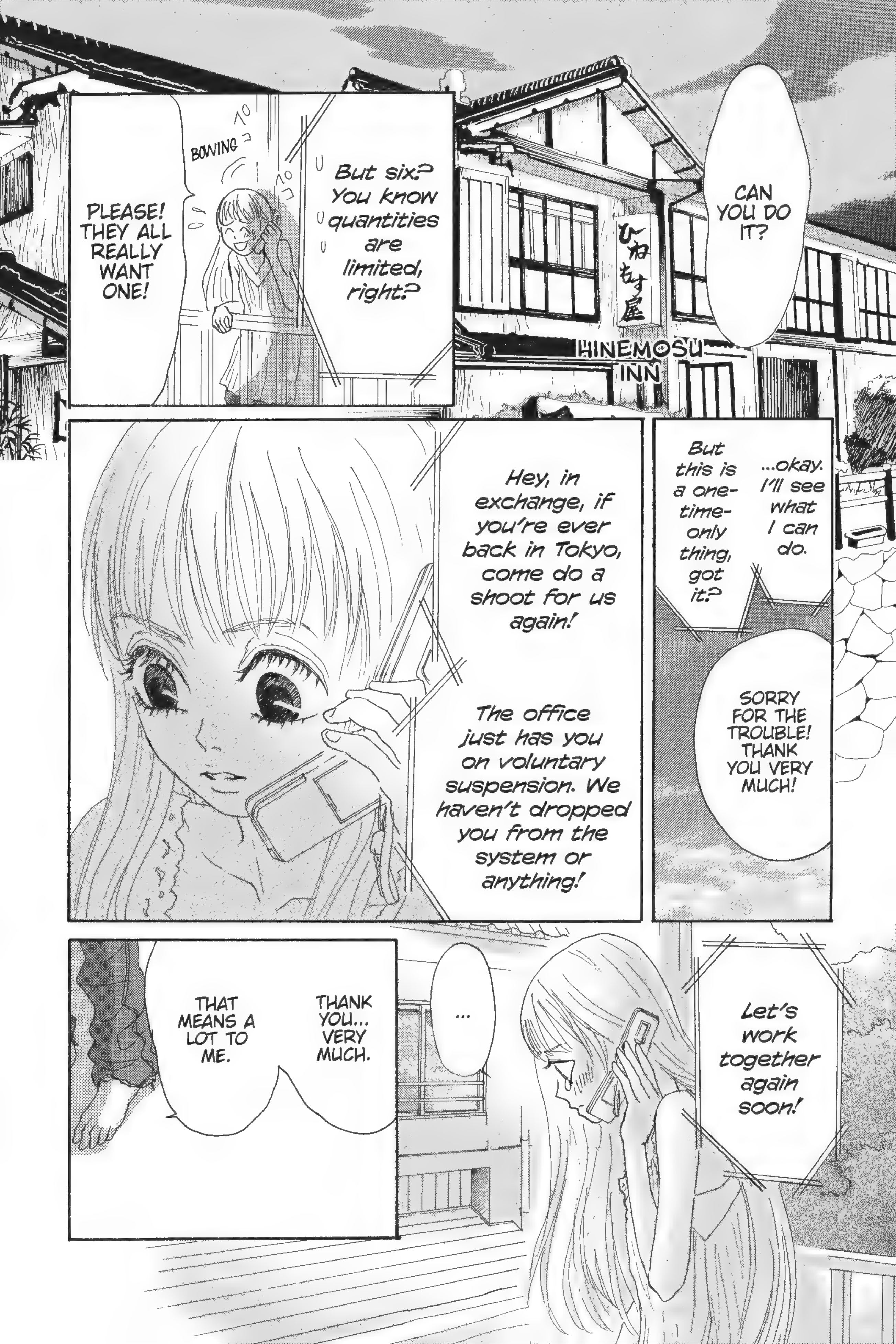
*a Shinto priest

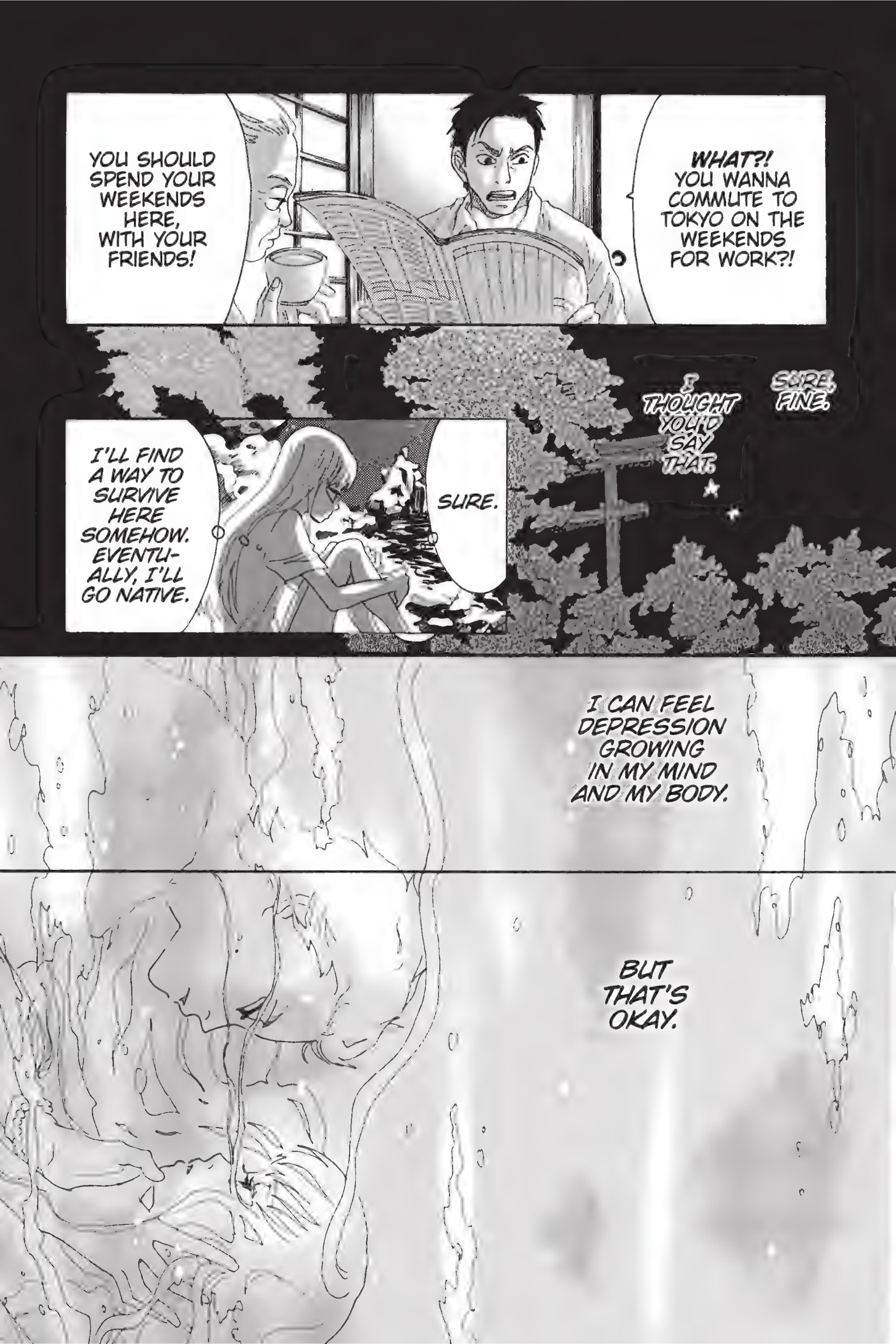

KOU-CHAN'S UNCLE IS THE ONE WHO TAKES CARE OF THE MAIN SHRINE.
I BET HE KNOWS HOW TO HANDLE THE CURSE.
MAIN SHRINE? I DON'T GET IT.
WELL, I GUESS THAT EXPLAINS WHY HE WASN'T AT THE BEACH.
LOOKS LIKE FUN!
LEMME HELP BRAID, TOO!
ME TOO!
THIS WAS SUCH A GOOD IDEA!
WELL? DO YA FEEL LIKE ONE OF US NOW?
IF ANYTHING'S TROUBLIN' YOU, JUST LET US KNOW, OKAY?
OUR SCHOOL AIN'T GOT MORE'N ONE CLASS PER GRADE, SO WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOREVER!
YOU'VE NEVER MOVED SCHOOLS BEFORE, HAVE YOU?
ALL US GIRLS ARE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE, THOUGH!
I'M GLAD, TOO! EVERYONE HERE IS SO NICE!
WELL... ALL THE ***GIRLS***, AT LEAST!
HA HA HA

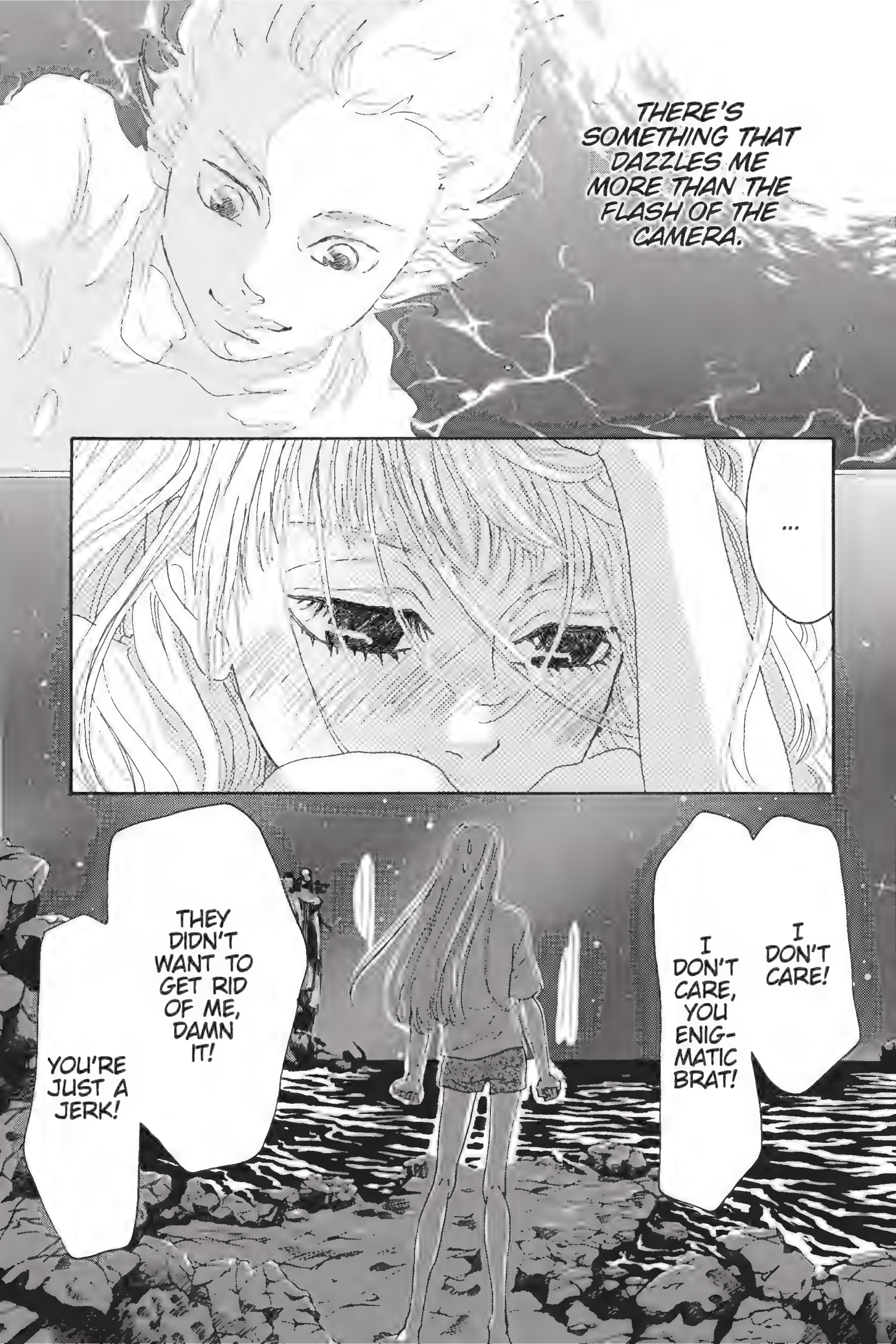

キーンコーンカーンコーン
DING
DONG
DANG
DONG
IT'S THE WARNING BELL!
BETTER HURRY!
...
ボソ
WHISPER
ボソ
WHISPER
SHE'S GOT LONG LEGS, THAT'S FOR SURE.
HER HEAD'S SUCH A KOOKY SHAPE, THOUGH.
HA HA!
KOOKY?
AH, IT'S NOTHIN'.
AH, NAH, WE SAID IT WAS COOL!
I GUESS THAT'S A PRO MODEL FOR YA.
SHE'S GOT SUCH GOOD HEARIN'.

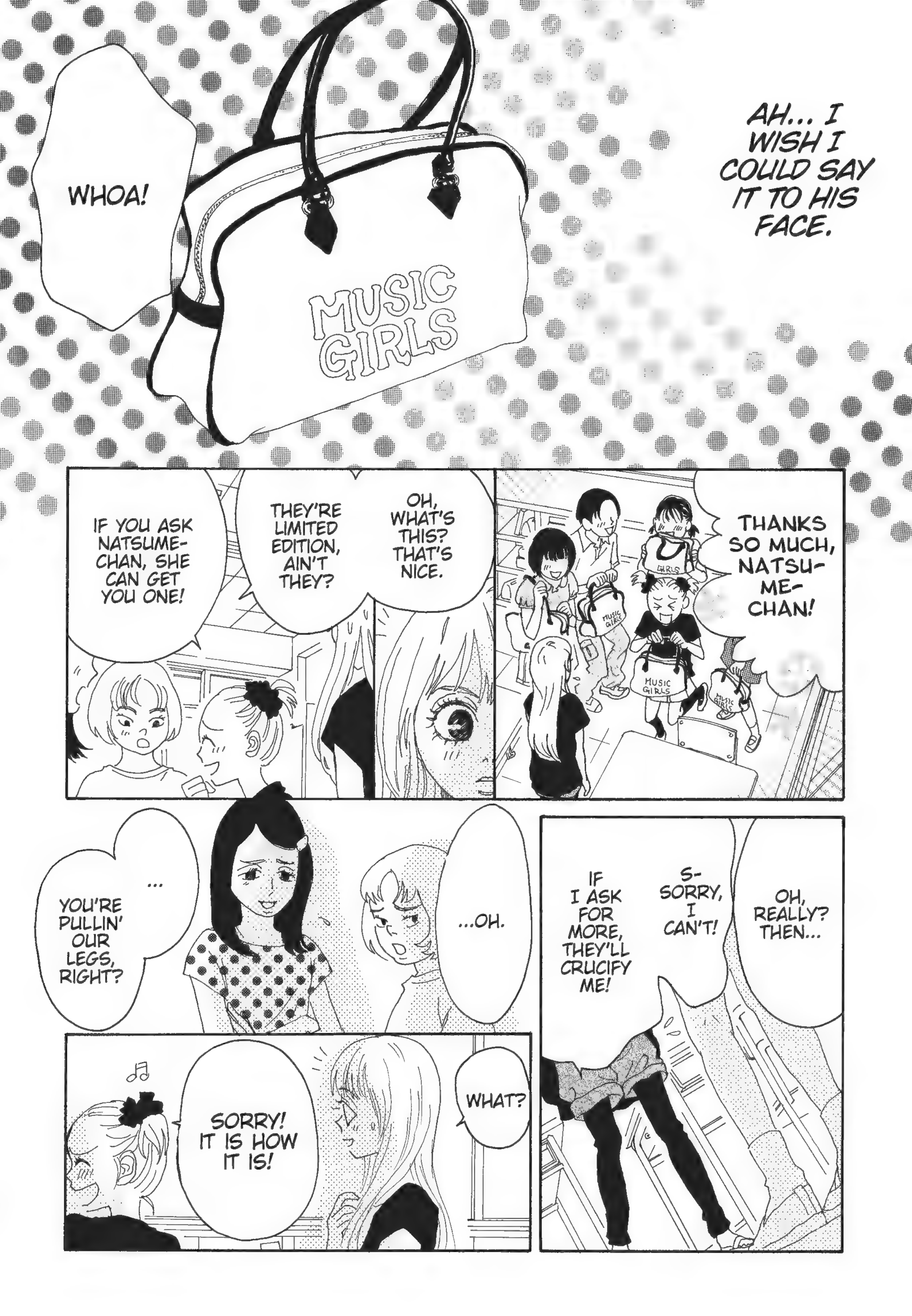

OH, IS IT BAD THAT I HAVE GOOD HEARING?
YEAH, I HEAR YOU.
THE SOUND OF YOU SAYING "TOKYO" AND "MODEL" OVER AND OVER RESOUNDS LOUD AND CLEAR IN MY SKULL.
AND THAT'S ALL I HEAR.
IT WORRIES ME.
LOOK!
IT'S PLUM'S LATEST ISSUE!
PLUM
プラム
10
SCHOOL UNIFORM CHIC
制服美少女
グランプリ
GRAND PRIX!
名物 ヤーヤー餅
旅先案内人
WORLD-FAMOUS YAYA CAKES! TRAVEL GUIDE RECOMMENDED!
WOW, NATSUME-CHAN! YOU'RE ON THE COVER?!
わーー
WHOA...
I'M GONNA BUY A COPY, TOO!
THANKS...
THOSE CLOTHES ARE BRAND-NAME, RIGHT?
YOU'RE ALWAYS WEARIN' SUCH CUTE OUTFITS...
THEY'VE ALREADY FINISHED SHOOTING THE NEXT ISSUE BY NOW...
"SHORE I GOT A CALL FROM THE OFFICE. I WENT AN' TOLD 'EM YA QUIT FER GOOD!"
...and he already reverted to his native dialect, too...

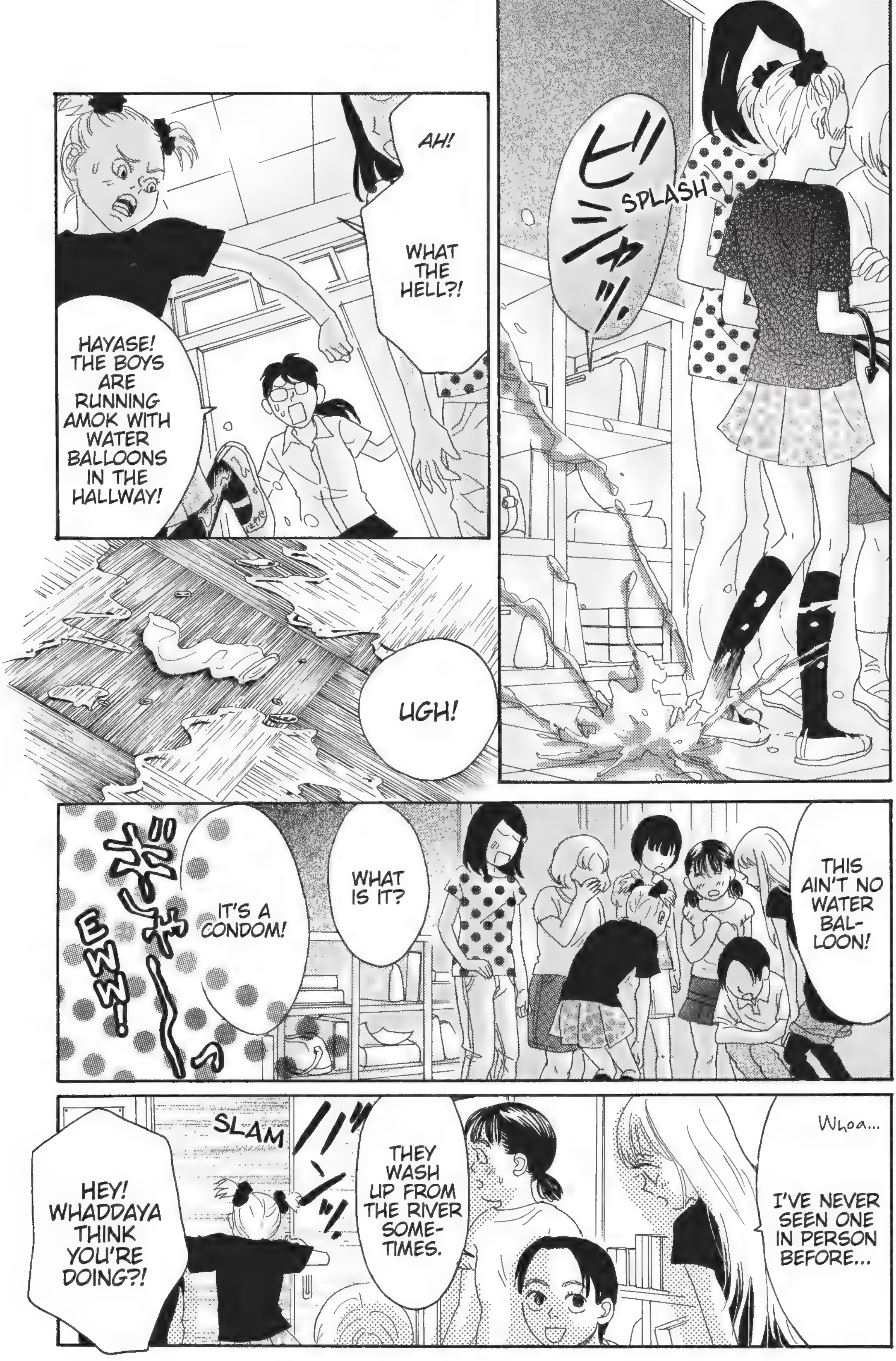

LOOK!
THIS IS SO CUTE!
WE ONLY GET TO SEE STUFF LIKE THAT ON TV OR IN MAGAZINES.
プラム PLUM
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A DESIGNER HANDBAG LIKE THIS! AN' THIS ONE'S LIMITED EDITION, TOO!
I BET YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF THINGS LIKE THIS, NATSUME-CHAN.
MUSIC GIRLS
¥8,00
*Approximately $80
A DOUBLE-BRANDED COLLAB BETWEEN PLUM AND MUSIC GIRLS! CARRY YOUR TEXTBOOKS IN STYLE WITH THIS
UMM... WELL...
THIS IS ACTUALLY FROM A THRIFT STORE IN HARAJUKU.
¥2000
*Approximately $20
HARAJUKU?!
¥1200
*Approximately $12
BUT ALL WE'VE GOT...
...ARE THE THINGS THE DEPARTMENT STORE SELLS THAT WE CAN'T AFFORD ANYWAY.
はぁ SIGH...
IN THE END, THEY REALLY ONLY EXIST ON TV AND IN MAGAZINES...
...
...YOU KNOW...
...I DON'T KNOW IF IT'LL WORK, BUT IF YOU REALLY WANT ONE, I COULD CALL EDITORIAL AND ASK, MAYBE?

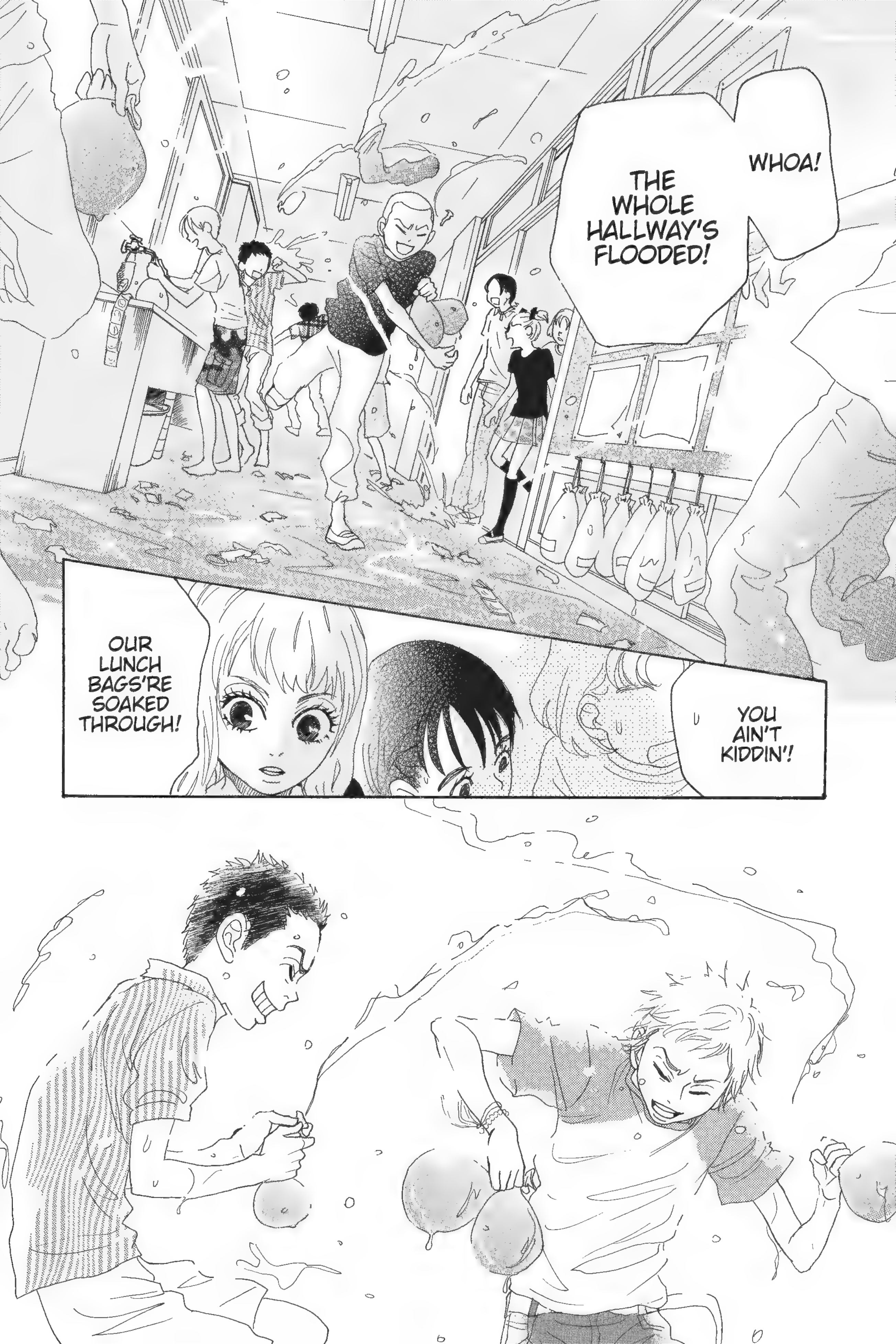

CAN YOU DO IT?
ひねもす屋
HINEMOSU INN
But six? You know quantities are limited, right?
BOWING
PLEASE! THEY ALL REALLY WANT ONE!
...okay. I'll see what I can do.
But this is a one-time-only thing, got it?
SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
Hey, in exchange, if you're ever back in Tokyo, come do a shoot for us again!
The office just has you on voluntary suspension. We haven't dropped you from the system or anything!
Let's work together again soon!
...
THANK YOU... VERY MUCH.
THAT MEANS A LOT TO ME.

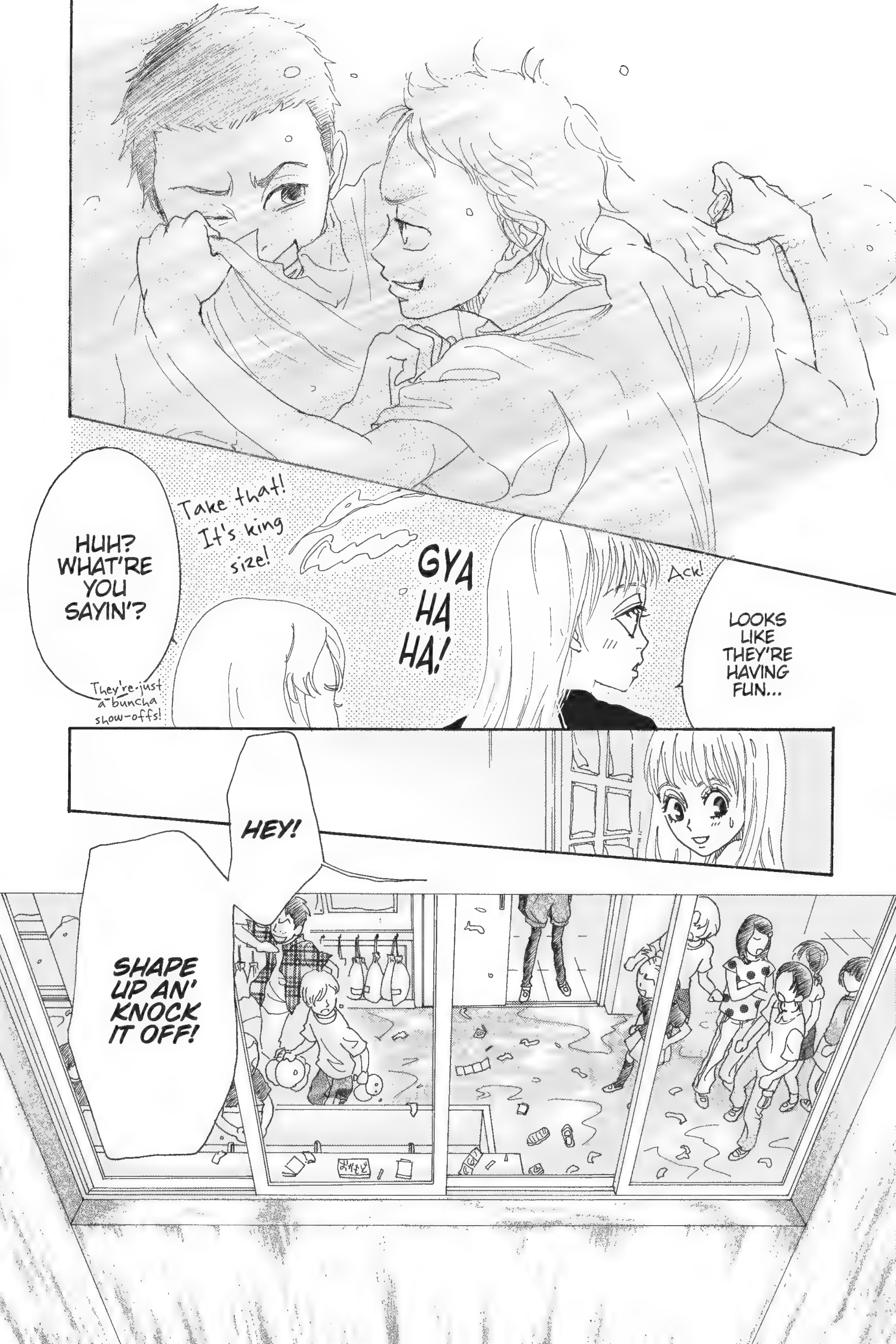

WHAT?! YOU WANNA COMMUTE TO TOKYO ON THE WEEKENDS FOR WORK?!
YOU SHOULD SPEND YOUR WEEKENDS HERE, WITH YOUR FRIENDS!
SURE, FINE.
I THOUGHT YOU'D SAY THAT.
SURE.
I'LL FIND A WAY TO SURVIVE HERE SOMEHOW. EVENTUALLY, I'LL GO NATIVE.
I CAN FEEL DEPRESSION GROWING IN MY MIND AND MY BODY.
BUT THAT'S OKAY.

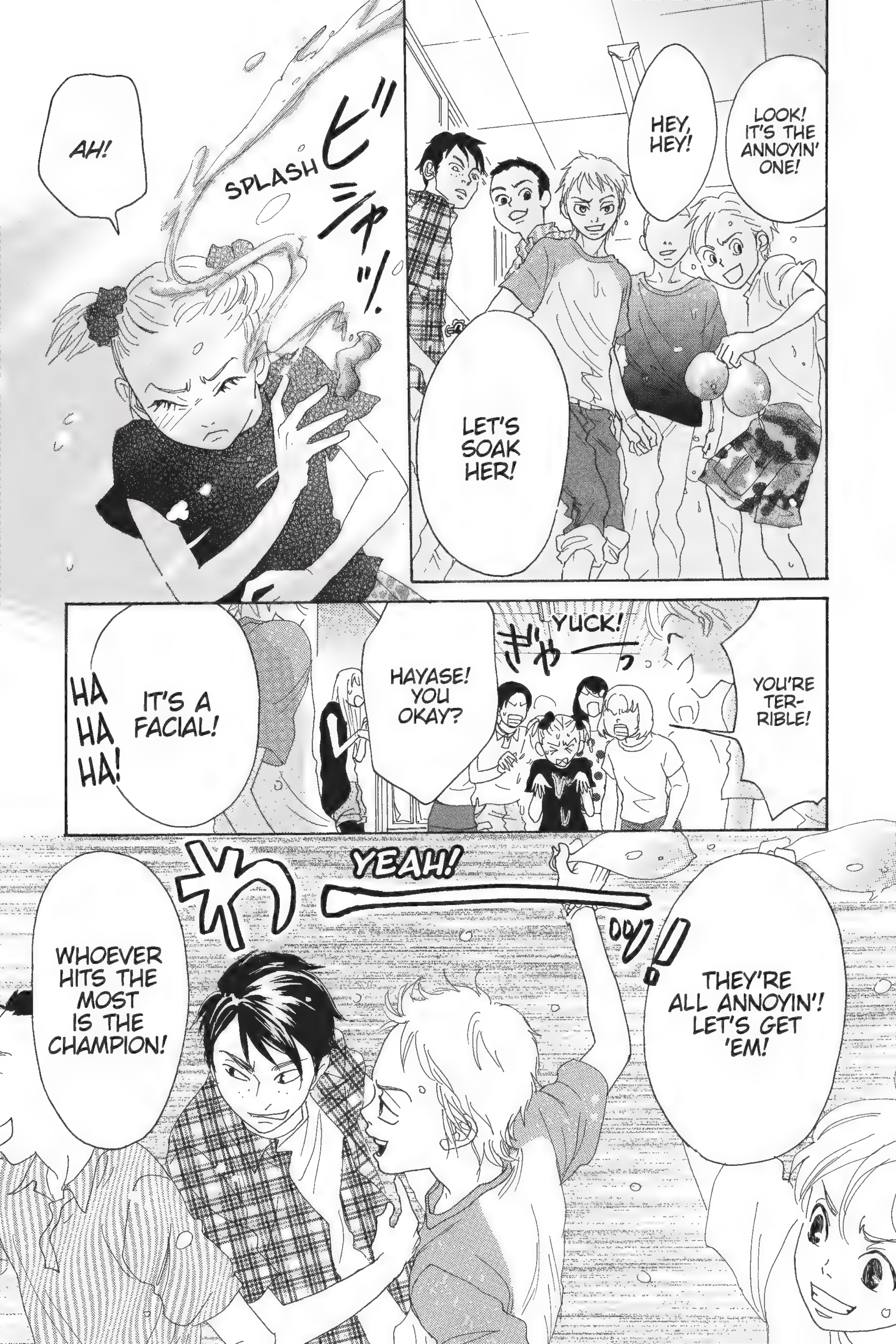

THERE'S SOMETHING THAT DAZZLES ME MORE THAN THE FLASH OF THE CAMERA.
...
I DON'T CARE!
I DON'T CARE, YOU ENIGMATIC BRAT!
THEY DIDN'T WANT TO GET RID OF ME, DAMN IT!
YOU'RE JUST A JERK!

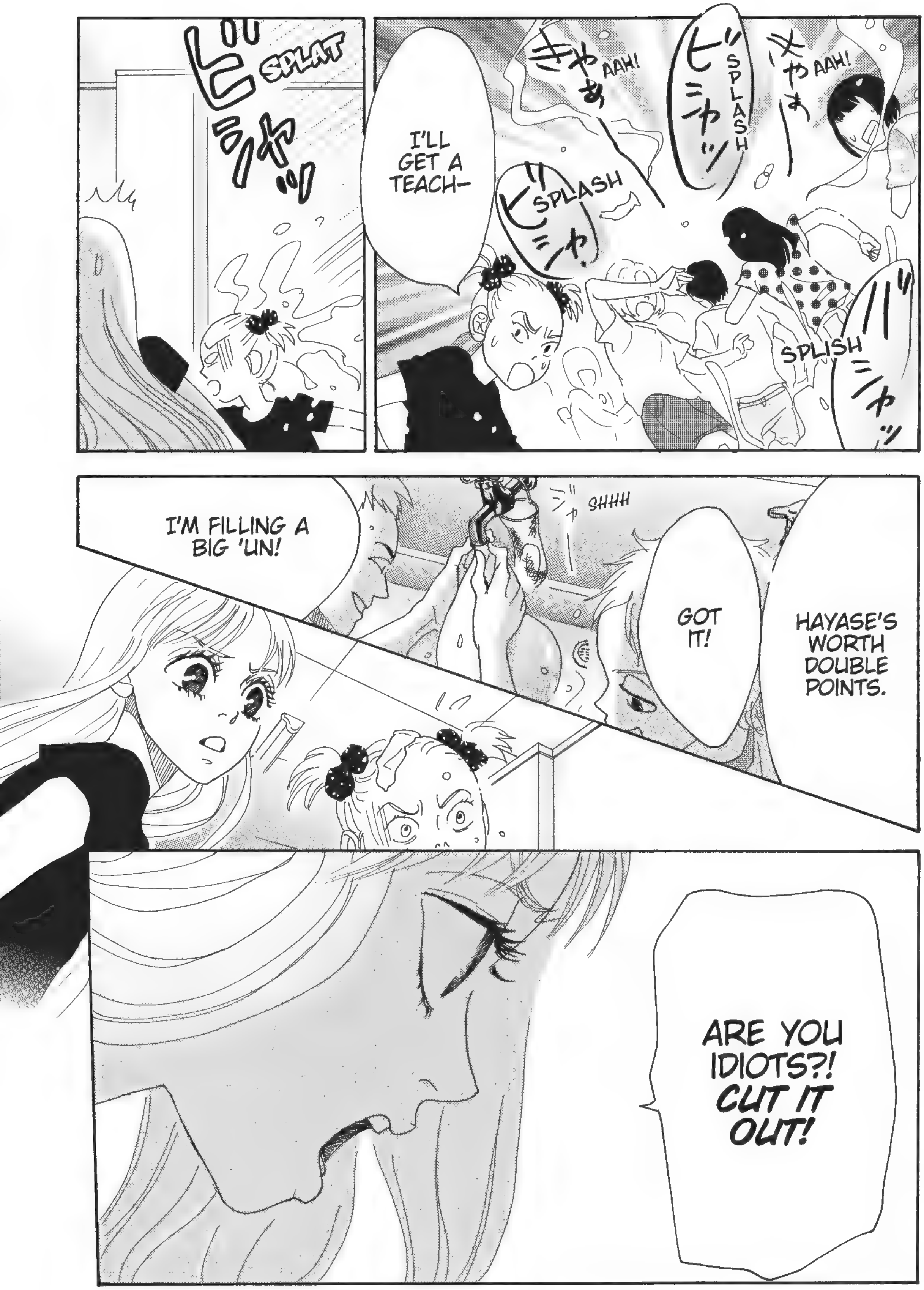

AH... I WISH I COULD SAY IT TO HIS FACE.
WHOA!
MUSIC GIRLS
THANKS SO MUCH, NATSUME-CHAN!
MUSIC GIRLS
OH, WHAT'S THIS? THAT'S NICE.
THEY'RE LIMITED EDITION, AIN'T THEY?
IF YOU ASK NATSUME-CHAN, SHE CAN GET YOU ONE!
OH, REALLY? THEN...
S-SORRY, I CAN'T!
IF I ASK FOR MORE, THEY'LL CRUCIFY ME!
...OH.
... YOU'RE PULLIN' OUR LEGS, RIGHT?
WHAT?
SORRY! IT IS HOW IT IS!

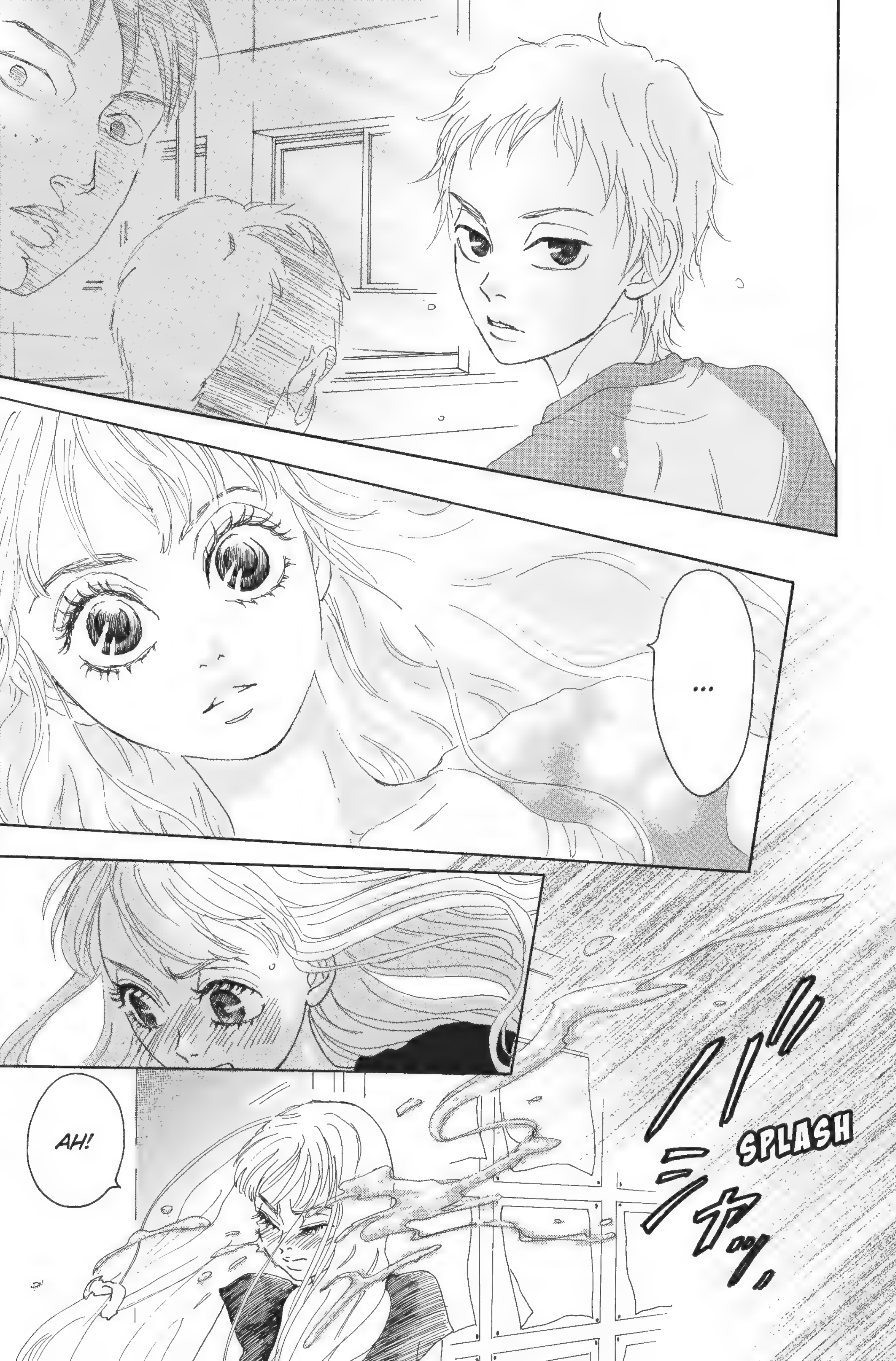

ビシャッ
SPLASH
AH!
WHAT THE HELL?!
HAYASE! THE BOYS ARE RUNNING AMOK WITH WATER BALLOONS IN THE HALLWAY!
UGH!
THIS AIN'T NO WATER BALLOON!
WHAT IS IT?
IT'S A CONDOM!
ギャ～～ッ
EWW!
Whoa...
I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE IN PERSON BEFORE...
THEY WASH UP FROM THE RIVER SOMETIMES.
SLAM
HEY! WHADDAYA THINK YOU'RE DOING?!

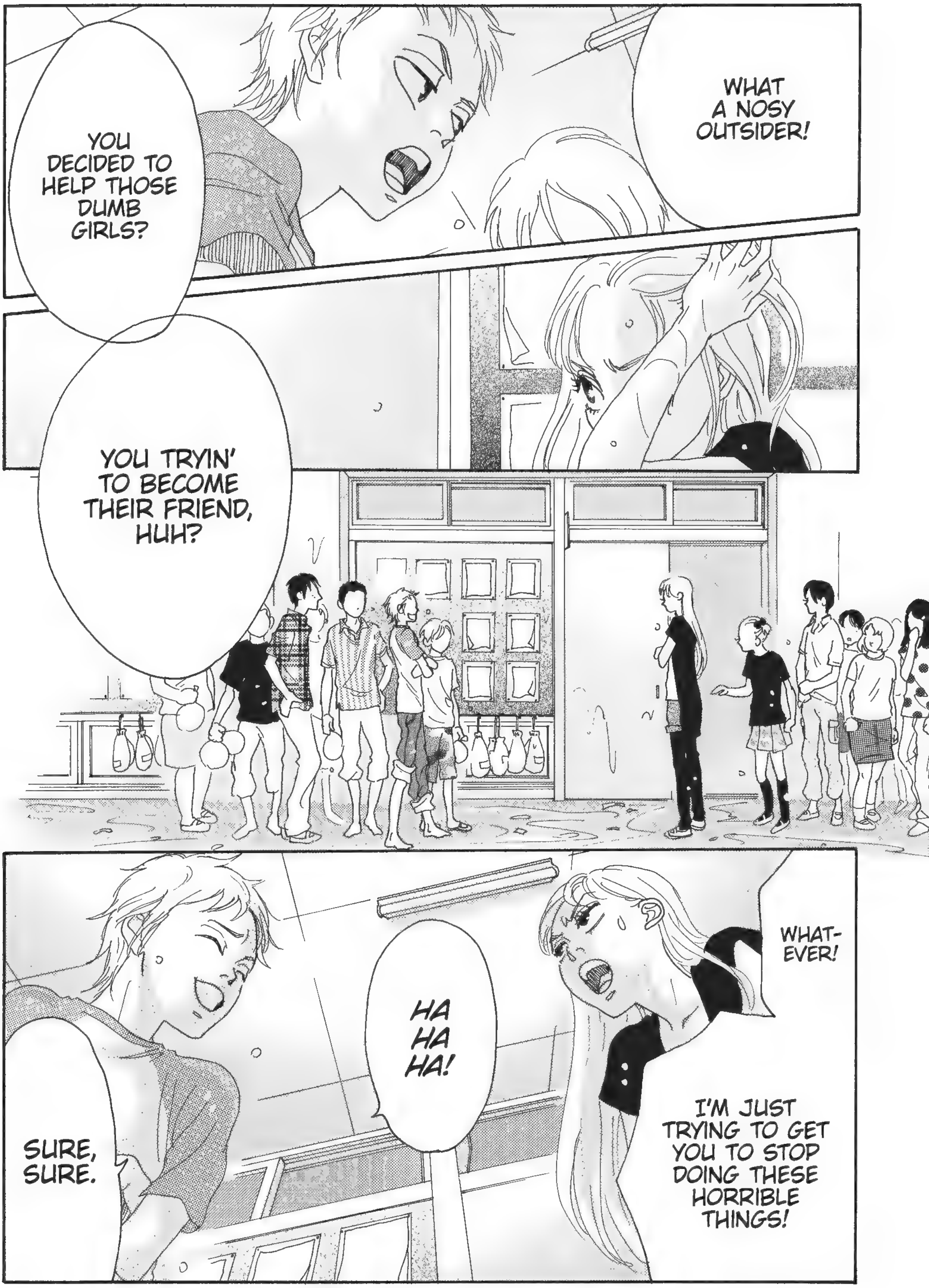

WHOA!
THE WHOLE HALLWAY'S FLOODED!
YOU AIN'T KIDDIN'!
OUR LUNCH BAGS'RE SOAKED THROUGH!

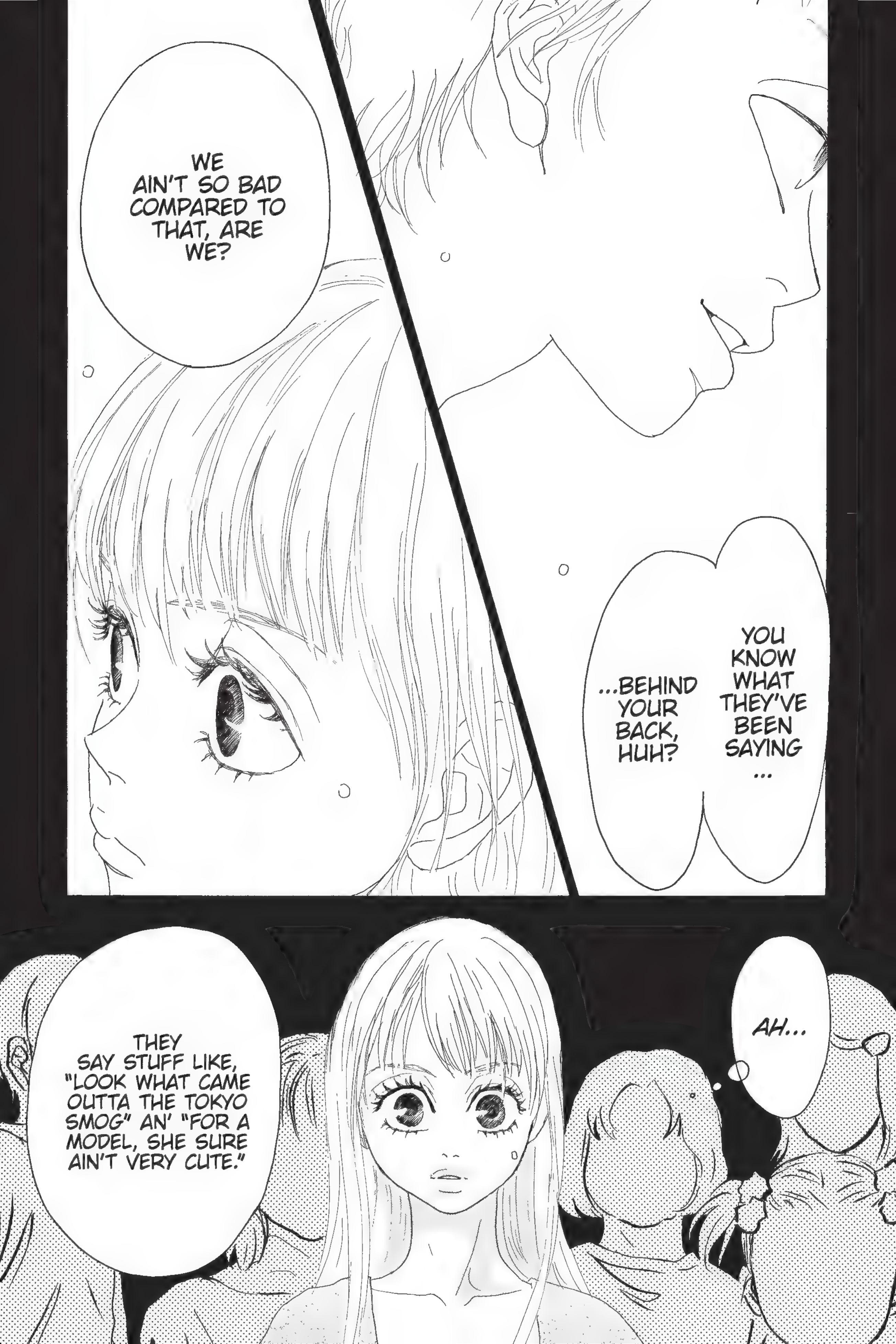

Ack!
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE HAVING FUN...
GYA HA HA!
Take that! It's king size!
HUH? WHAT'RE YOU SAYIN'?
They're just a buncha show-offs!
HEY!
SHAPE UP AN' KNOCK IT OFF!

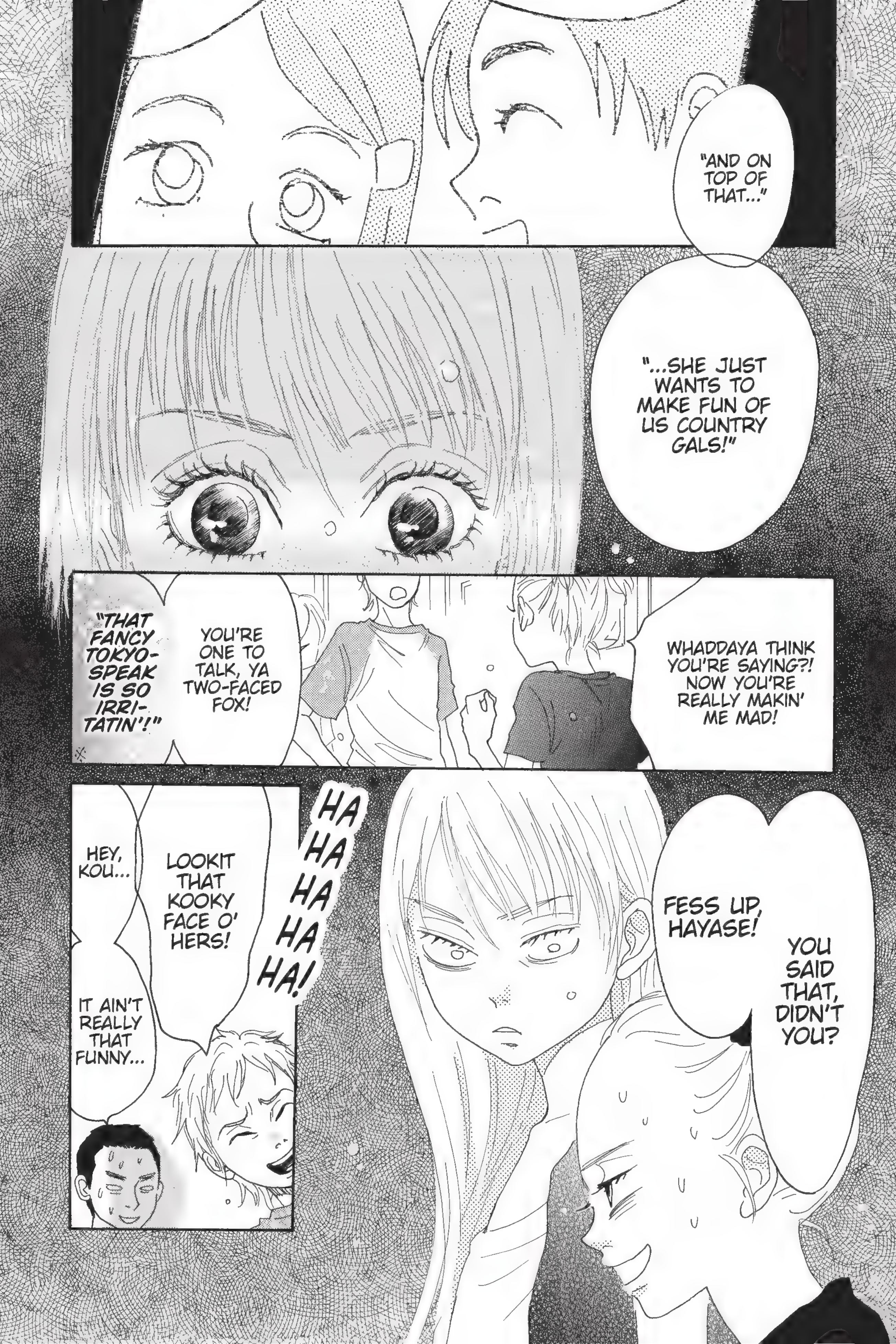

LOOK! IT'S THE ANNOYIN' ONE!
HEY, HEY!
LET'S SOAK HER!
ビシャッ!
SPLASH
AH!
YOU'RE TERRIBLE!
ぎゃーっ
YUCK!
HAYASE! YOU OKAY?
IT'S A FACIAL!
HA HA HA!
THEY'RE ALL ANNOYIN'! LET'S GET 'EM!
わーーッ!
YEAH!
WHOEVER HITS THE MOST IS THE CHAMPION!

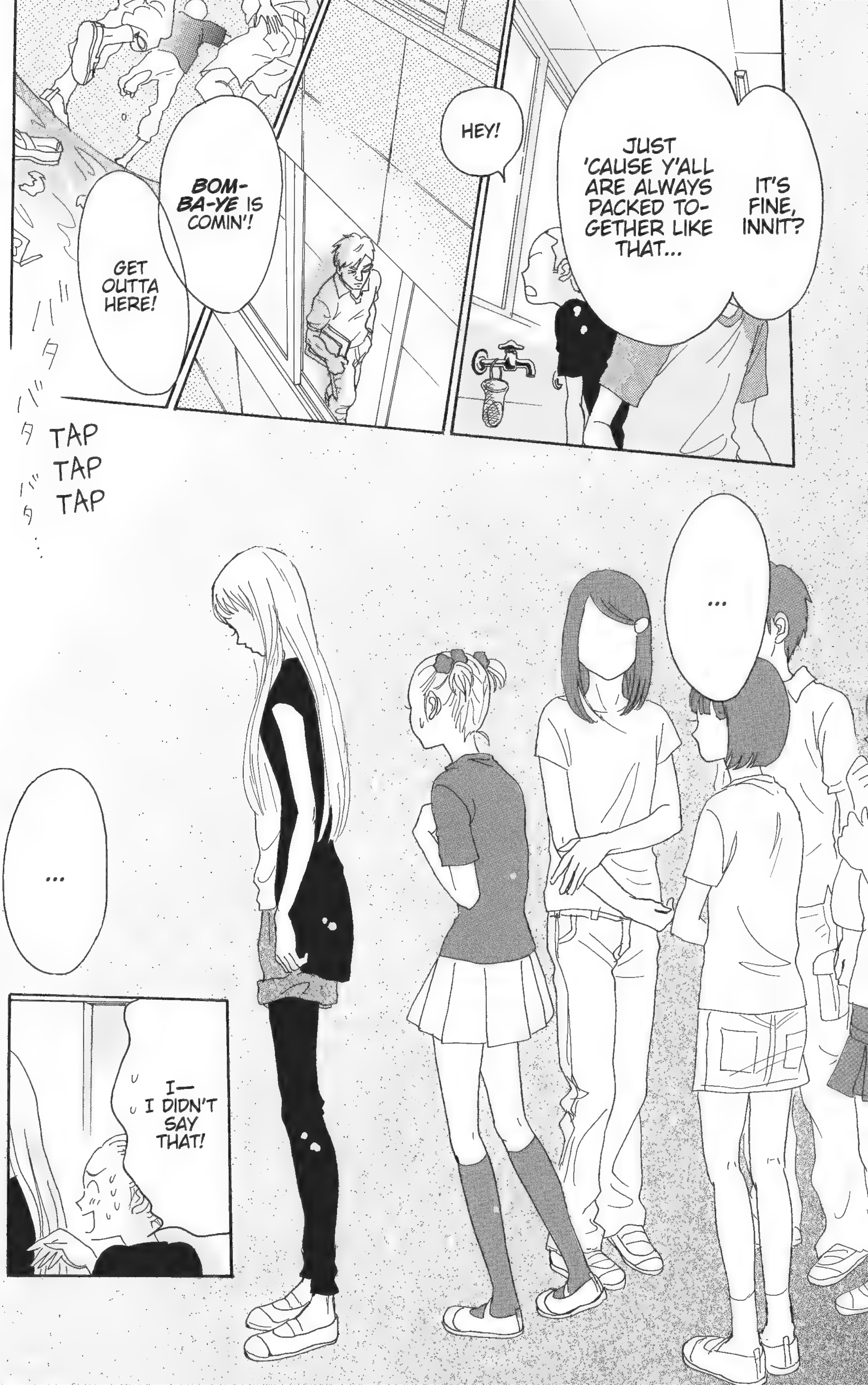

きゃあ AAH!
ビシャッ SPLASH
きゃあ AAH!
ビシャ SPLASH
バシャッ SPLISH
I'LL GET A TEACH–
ビシャッ SPLAT
HAYASE'S WORTH DOUBLE POINTS.
GOT IT!
ジャー SHHH
I'M FILLING A BIG 'UN!
ARE YOU IDIOTS?! *CUT IT OUT!*

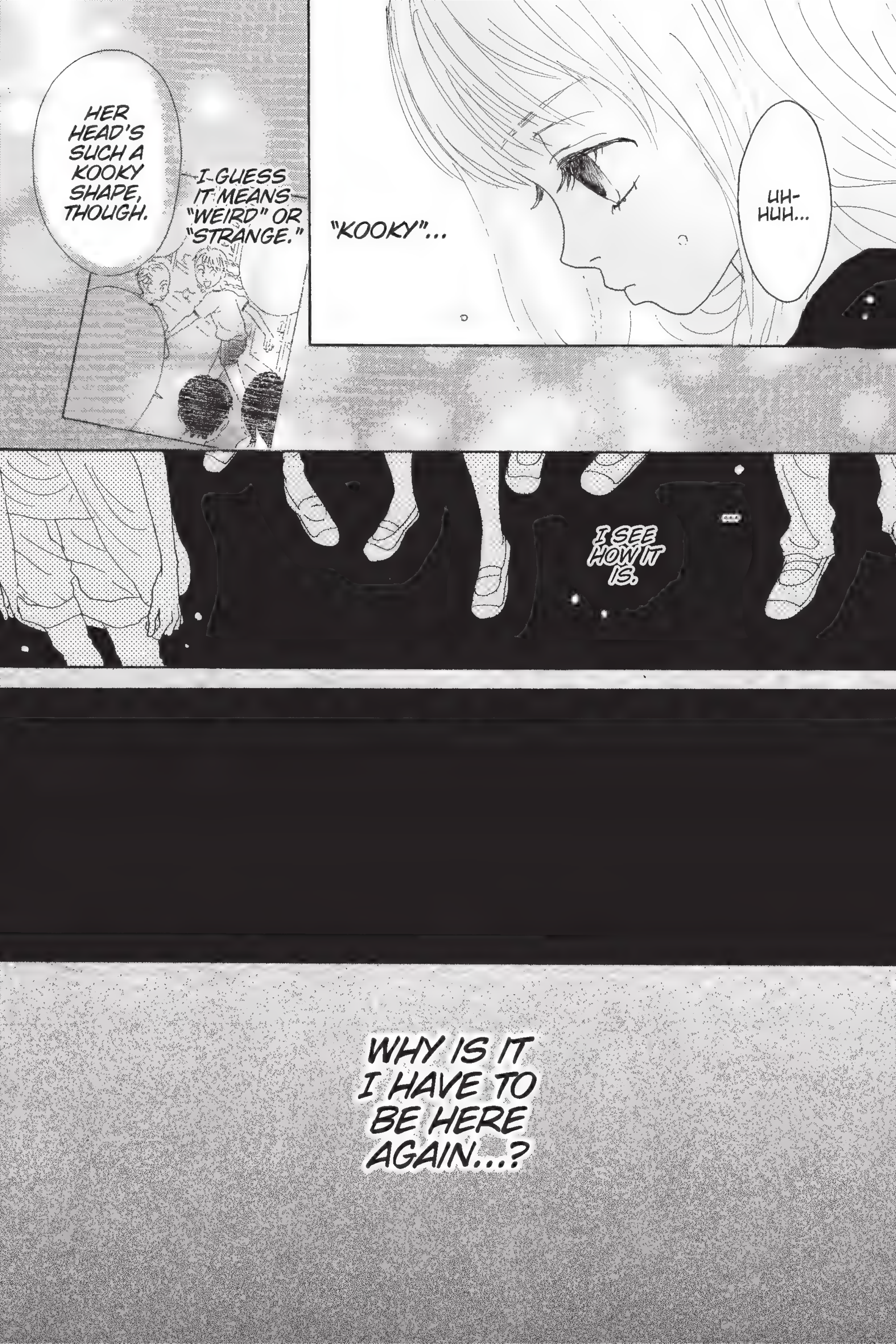

...
バシャッ
SPLASH
AH!

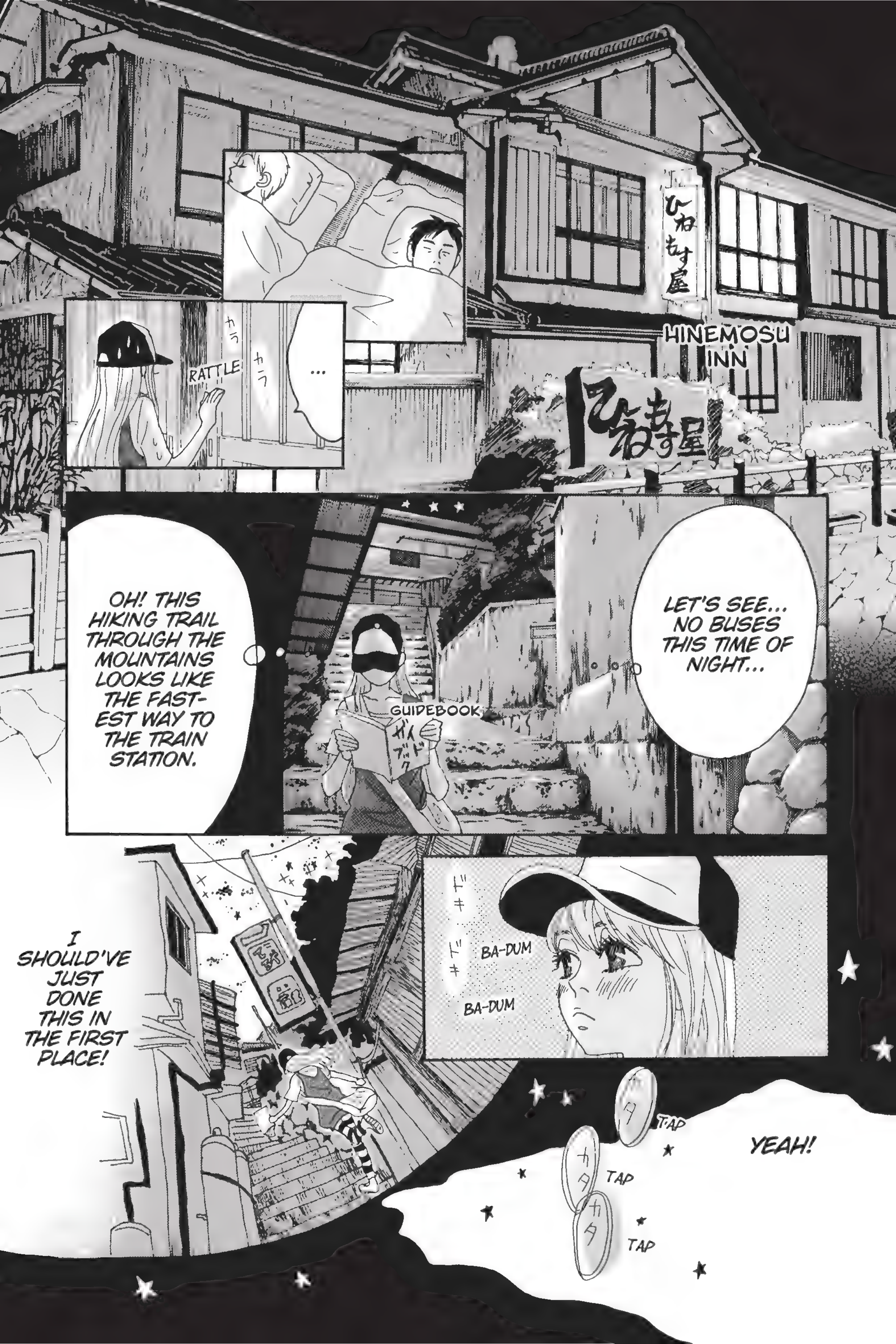

WHAT A NOSY OUTSIDER!
YOU DECIDED TO HELP THOSE DUMB GIRLS?
YOU TRYIN' TO BECOME THEIR FRIEND, HUH?
WHAT-EVER!
I'M JUST TRYING TO GET YOU TO STOP DOING THESE HORRIBLE THINGS!
HA HA HA!
SURE, SURE.

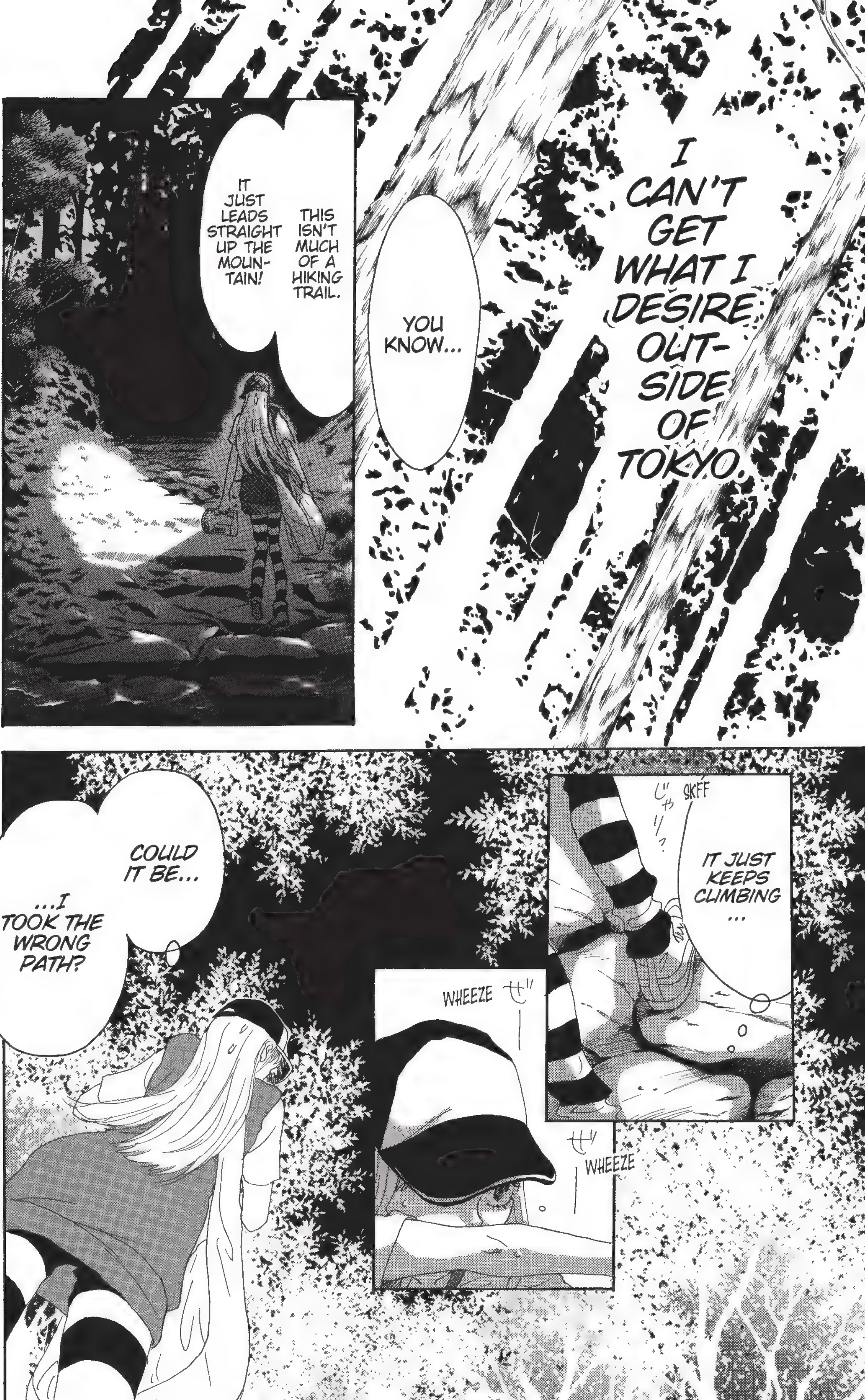

YOU KNOW WHAT THEY'VE BEEN SAYING...
...BEHIND YOUR BACK, HUH?
WE AIN'T SO BAD COMPARED TO THAT, ARE WE?
AH...
THEY SAY STUFF LIKE, "LOOK WHAT CAME OUTTA THE TOKYO SMOG" AN' "FOR A MODEL, SHE SURE AIN'T VERY CUTE."

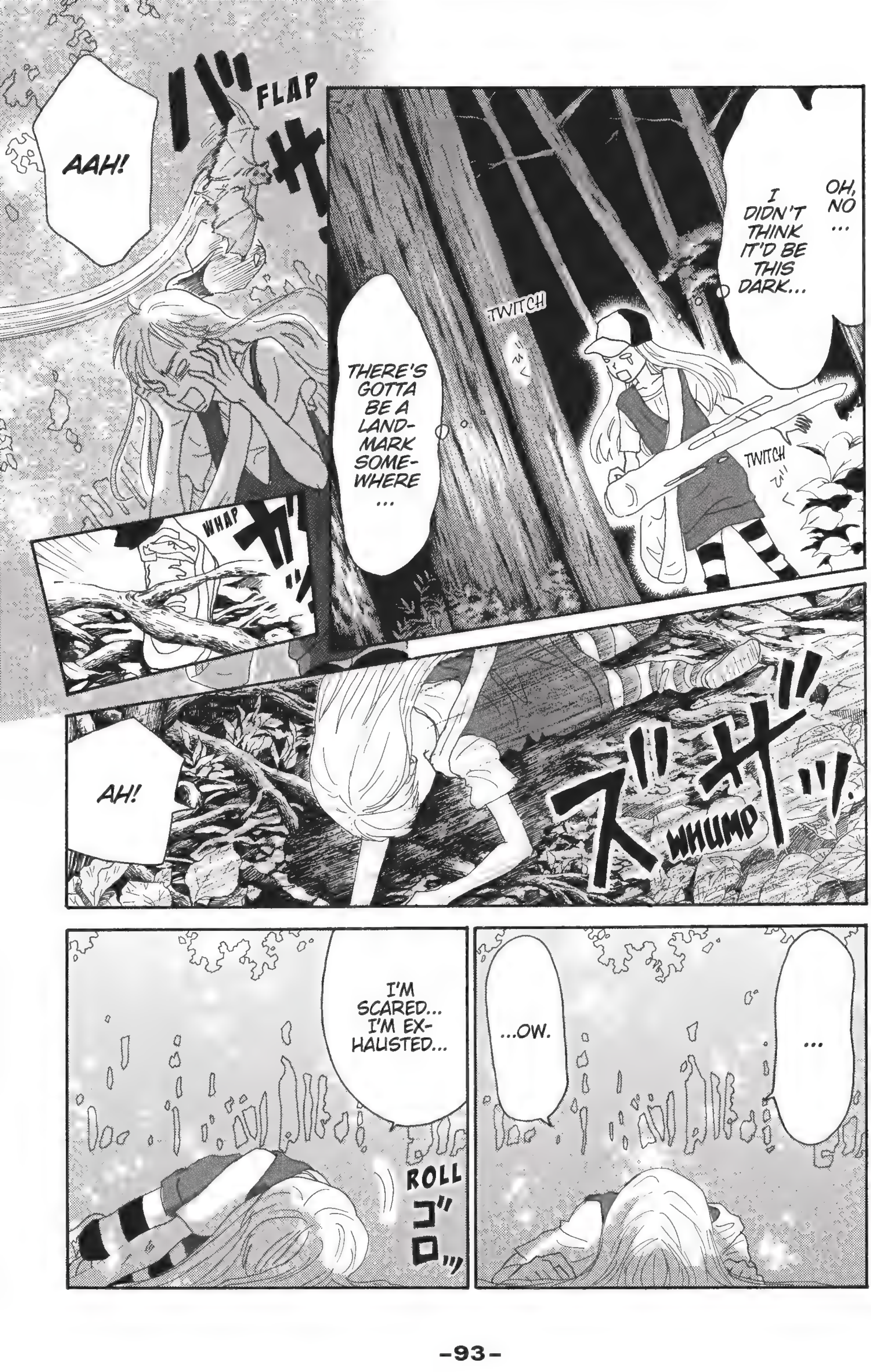

"AND ON TOP OF THAT..."
"...SHE JUST WANTS TO MAKE FUN OF US COUNTRY GALS!"
WHADDAYA THINK YOU'RE SAYING?! NOW YOU'RE REALLY MAKIN' ME MAD!
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK, YA TWO-FACED FOX!
"THAT FANCY TOKYO-SPEAK IS SO IRRITATIN'!" ※
FESS UP, HAYASE!
YOU SAID THAT, DIDN'T YOU?
HA HA HA HA HA!
LOOKIT THAT KOOKY FACE O' HERS!
HEY, KOU...
IT AIN'T REALLY THAT FUNNY...

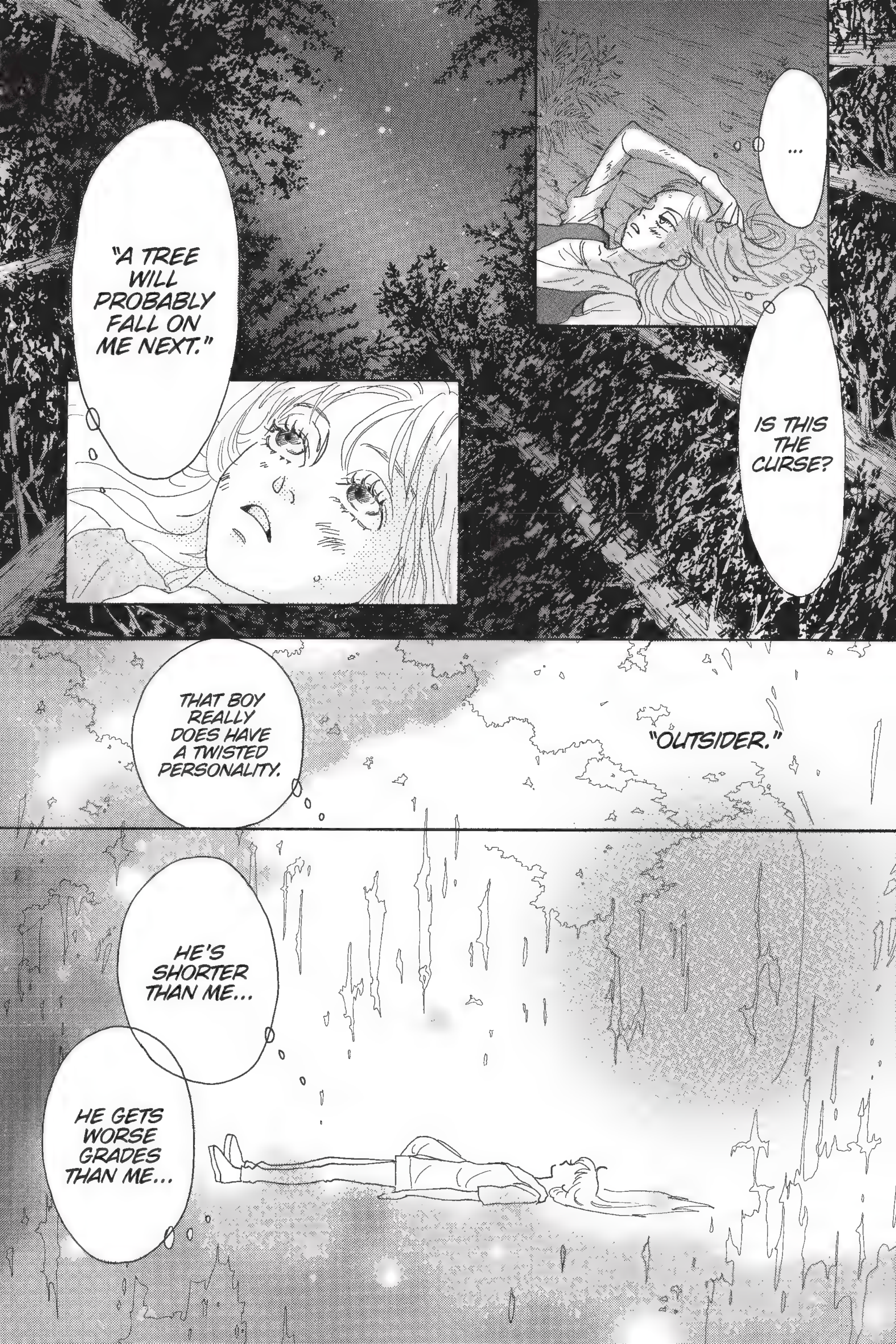

JUST 'CAUSE Y'ALL ARE ALWAYS PACKED TOGETHER LIKE THAT... IT'S FINE, INNIT?
HEY!
BOMBA-YE IS COMIN'!
GET OUTTA HERE!
タ バ タ バ タ
TAP TAP TAP
...
...
I— I DIDN'T SAY THAT!

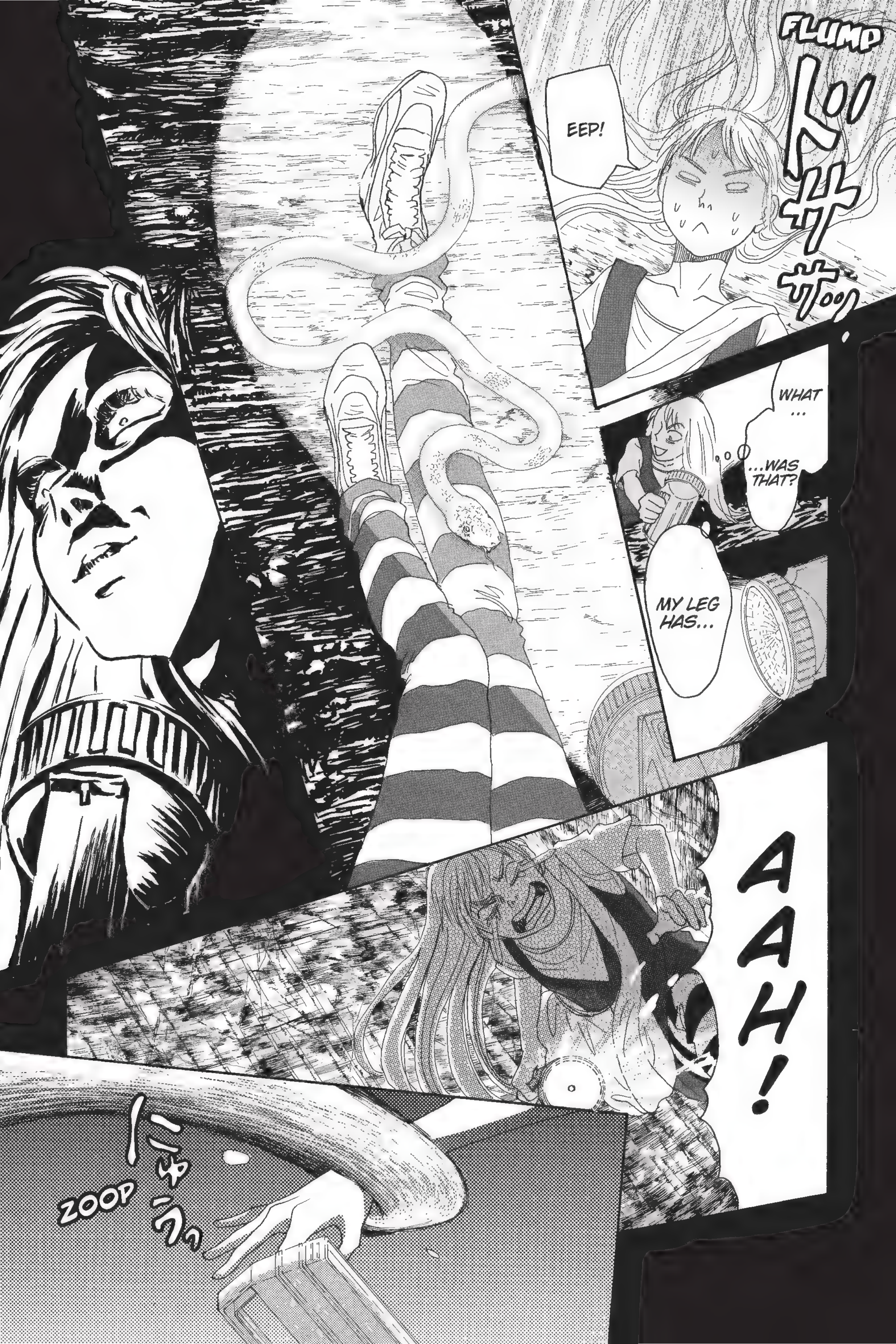

UH-HUH...
"KOOKY"...
HER HEAD'S SUCH A KOOKY SHAPE, THOUGH.
I GUESS IT MEANS "WEIRD" OR "STRANGE."
I SEE HOW IT IS.
WHY IS IT I HAVE TO BE HERE AGAIN...?

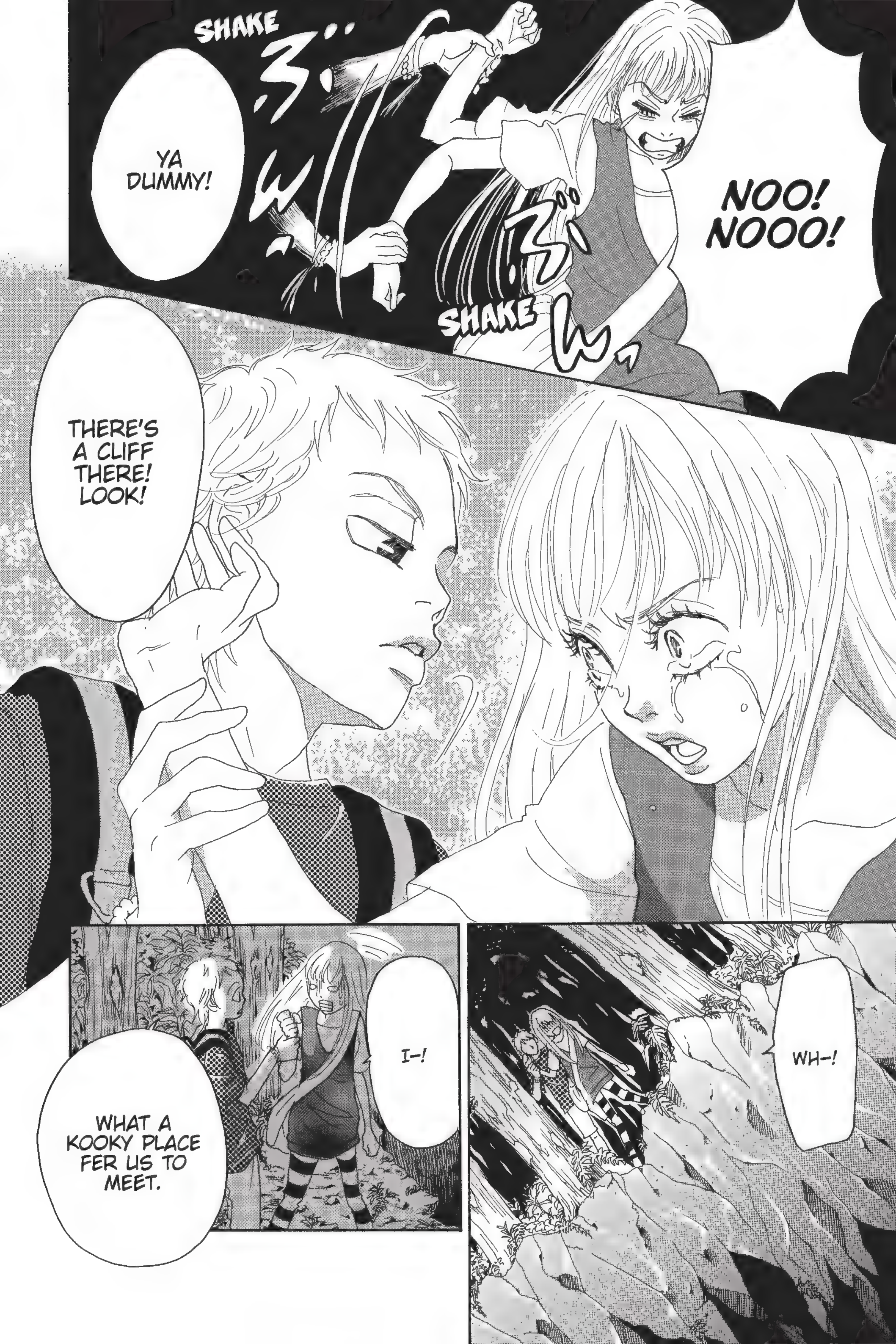

ひねもす屋
HINEMOSU INN
ひねもす屋
...
カラ カラ
RATTLE
LET'S SEE... NO BUSES THIS TIME OF NIGHT...
ガイドブック
GUIDEBOOK
OH! THIS HIKING TRAIL THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS LOOKS LIKE THE FASTEST WAY TO THE TRAIN STATION.
ドキ ドキ
BA-DUM
BA-DUM
I SHOULD'VE JUST DONE THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE!
YEAH!
カタ
TAP
カタ
TAP
カタ
TAP

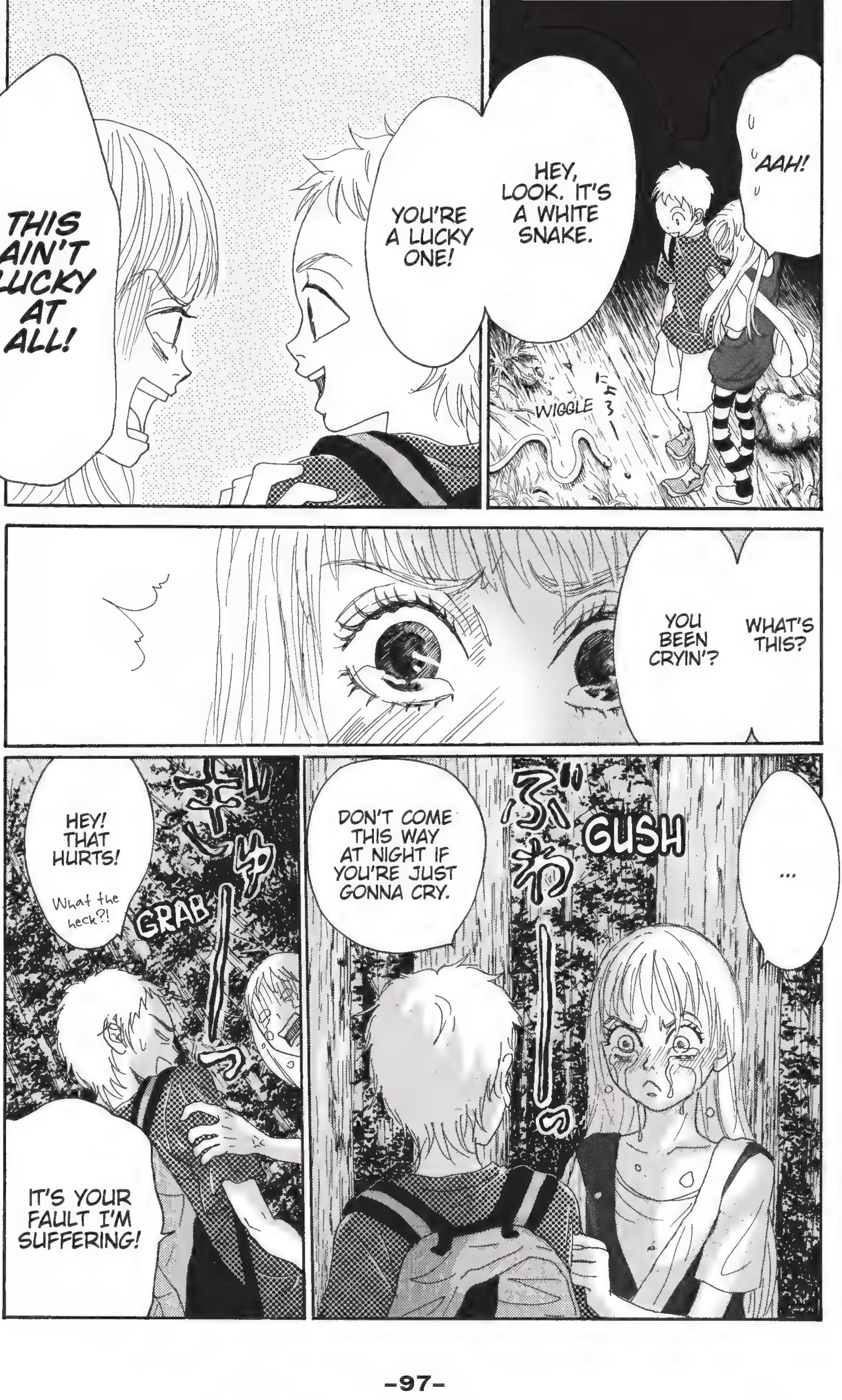

I CAN'T GET WHAT I DESIRE OUTSIDE OF TOKYO.
YOU KNOW...
THIS ISN'T MUCH OF A HIKING TRAIL.
IT JUST LEADS STRAIGHT UP THE MOUNTAIN!
じゃりっ
SKFF
IT JUST KEEPS CLIMBING...
ぜ
WHEEZE
ぜ
WHEEZE
COULD IT BE...
...I TOOK THE WRONG PATH?

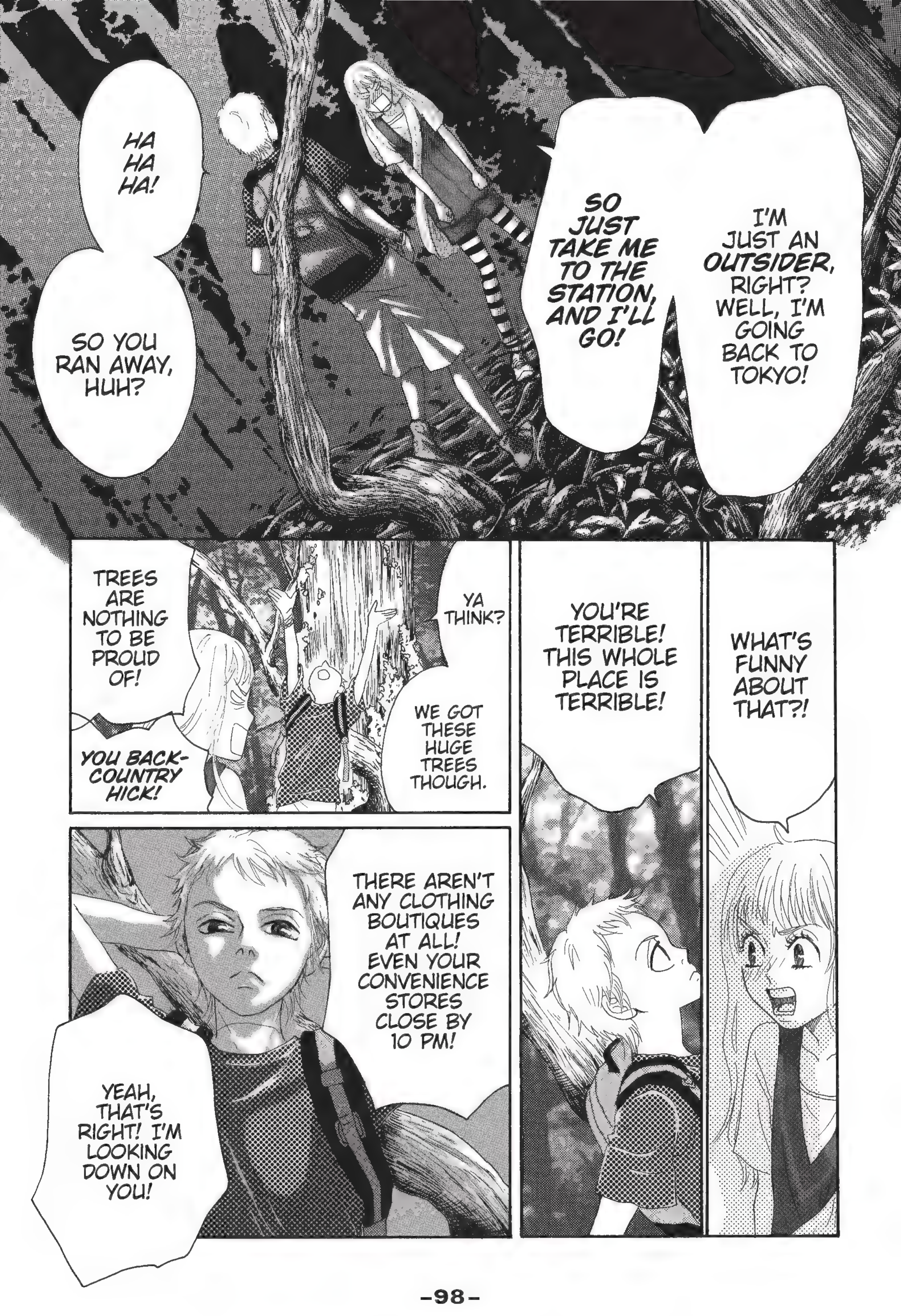

OH, NO...
I DIDN'T THINK IT'D BE THIS DARK...
TWITCH
ぴく
TWITCH
ぴく
THERE'S GOTTA BE A LANDMARK SOMEWHERE...
FLAP
バッ
サ
AAH!
WHAP
ガッ
ズザッ
WHUMP
AH!
...
...OW.
I'M SCARED... I'M EXHAUSTED...
ROLL
ゴロ

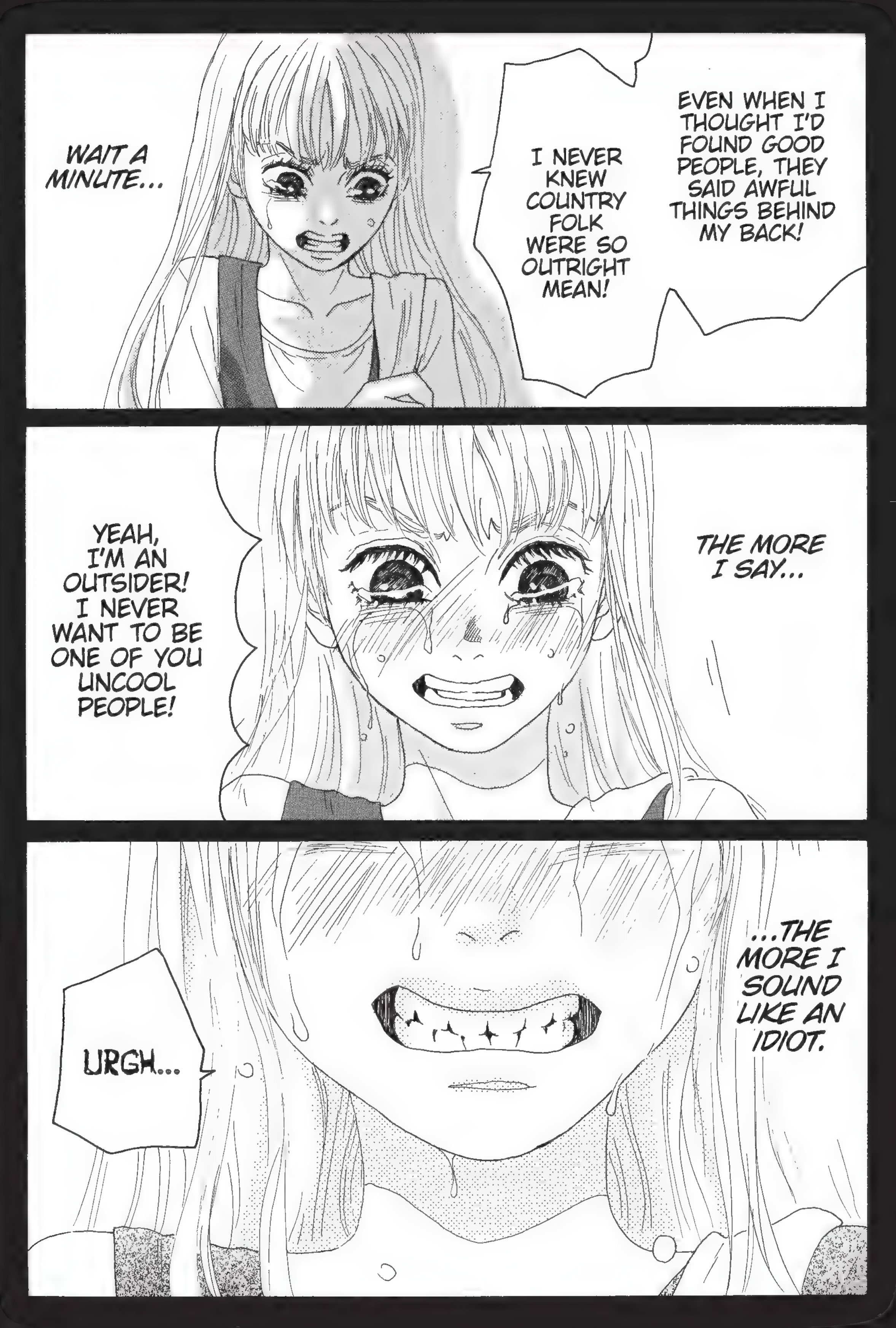

...
IS THIS THE CURSE?
"A TREE WILL PROBABLY FALL ON ME NEXT."
"OUTSIDER."
THAT BOY REALLY DOES HAVE A TWISTED PERSONALITY.
HE'S SHORTER THAN ME...
HE GETS WORSE GRADES THAN ME...

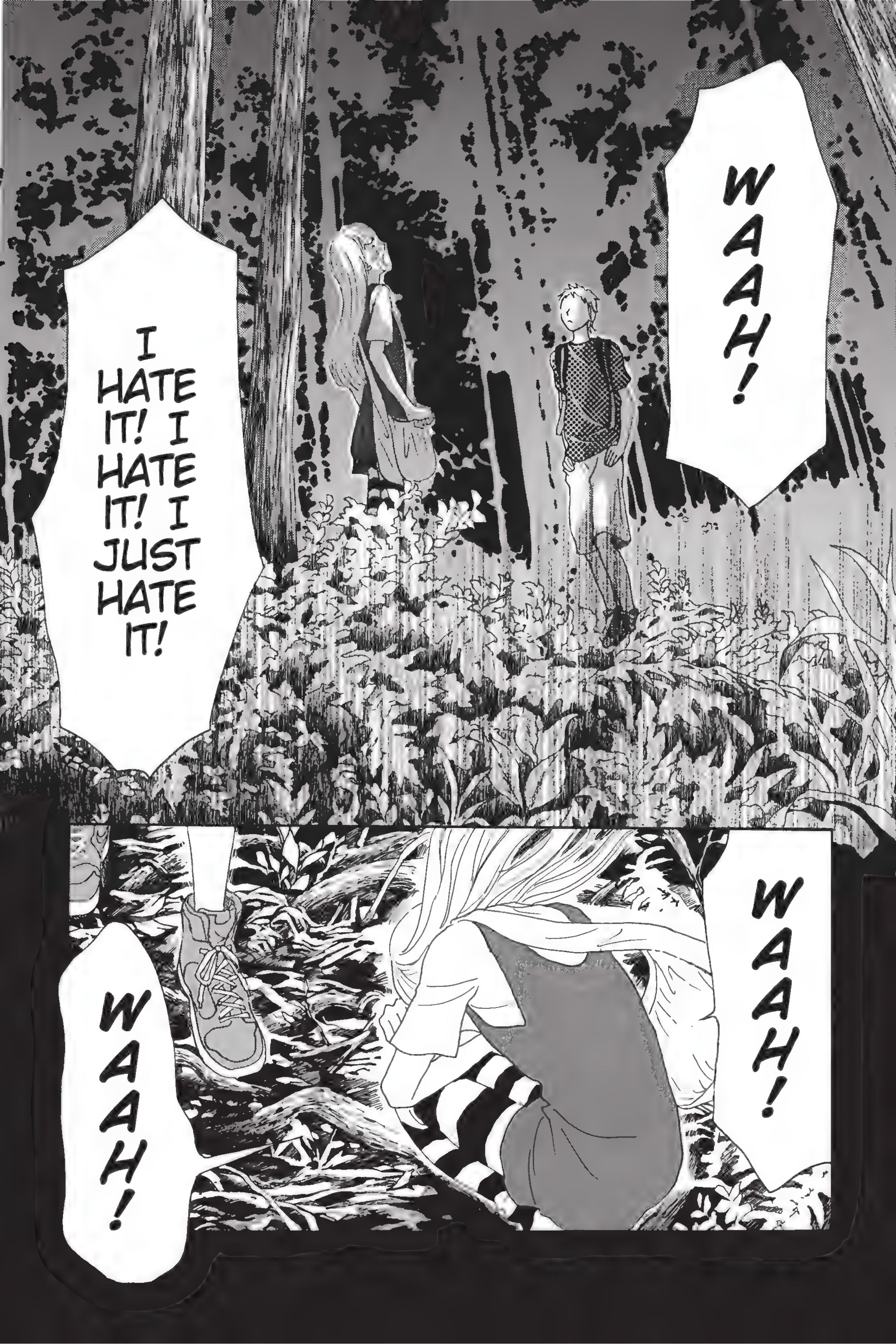

FLUMP
ドサ
サッ
EEP!
WHAT ...
...WAS THAT?
MY LEG HAS...
AAH!
ZOOP
にゅるっ

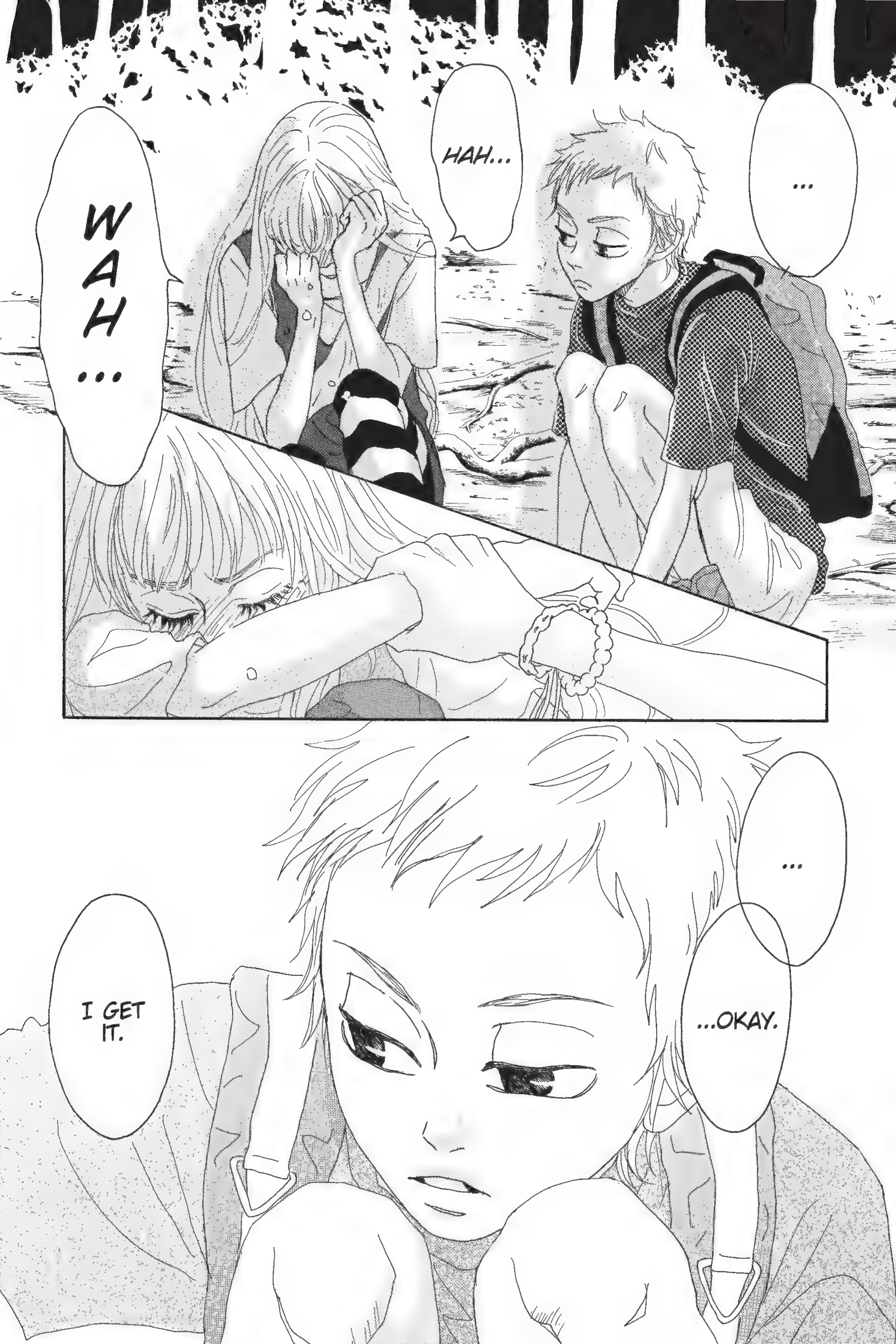

NOO! NOOO!
SHAKE
SHAKE
YA DUMMY!
THERE'S A CLIFF THERE! LOOK!
WH–!
I–!
WHAT A KOOKY PLACE FER US TO MEET.

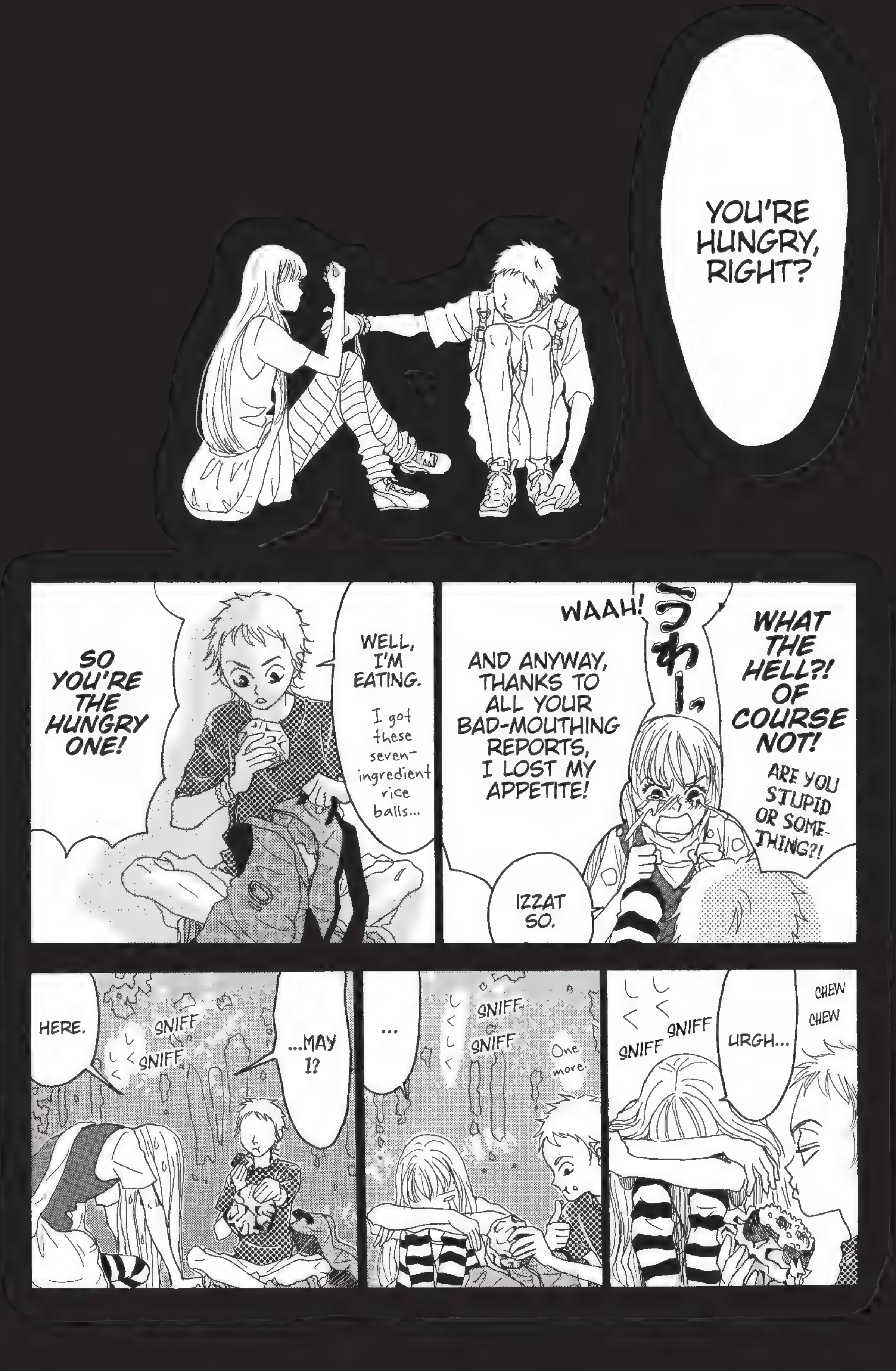

AAH!
HEY, LOOK. IT'S A WHITE SNAKE.
YOU'RE A LUCKY ONE!
WIGGLE
にょろ
THIS AIN'T LUCKY AT ALL!
WHAT'S THIS?
YOU BEEN CRYIN'?
...
GUSH
ぶわーっ
DON'T COME THIS WAY AT NIGHT IF YOU'RE JUST GONNA CRY.
HEY! THAT HURTS!
What the heck?!
GRAB
ぎゅーっ
IT'S YOUR FAULT I'M SUFFERING!

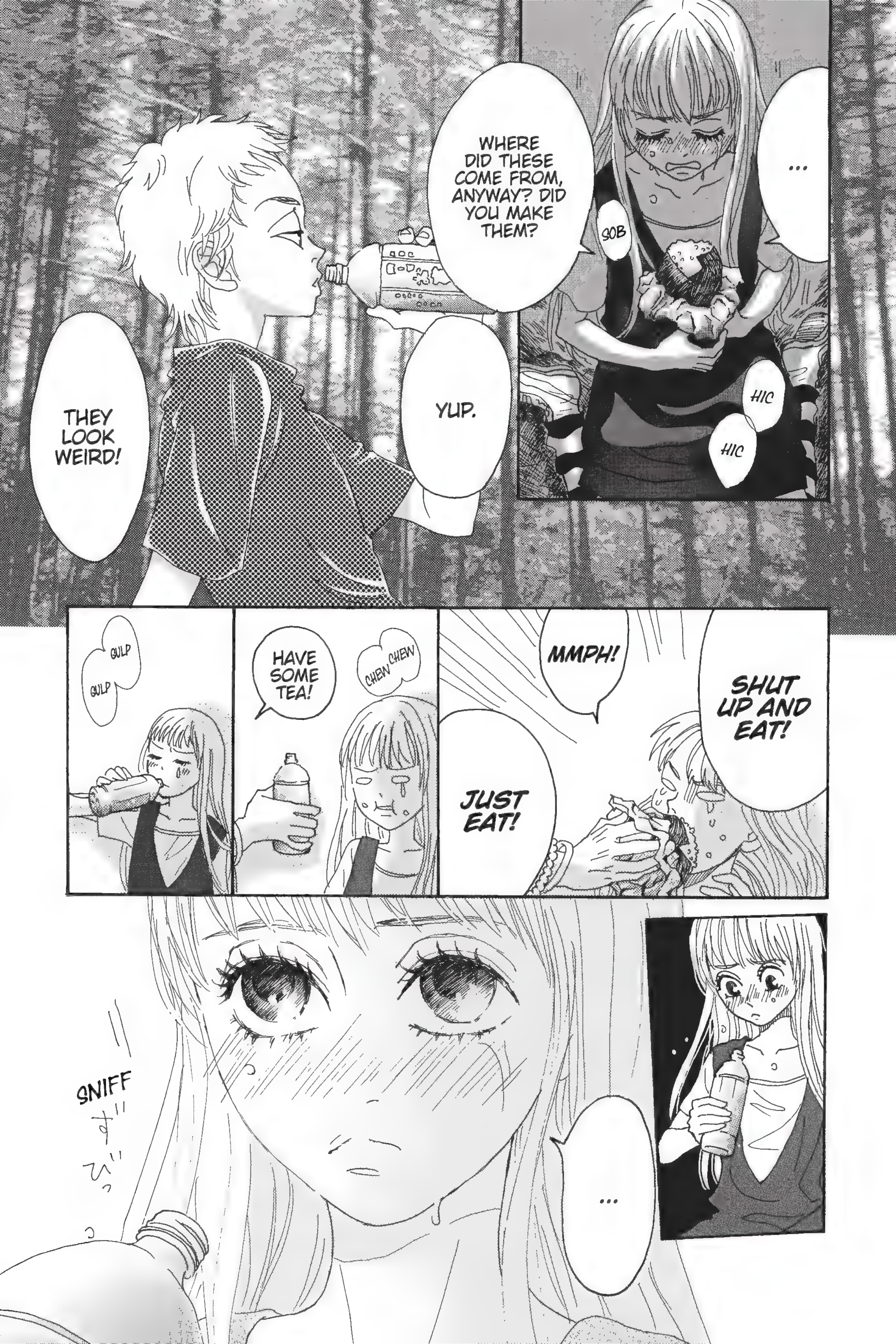

I'M JUST AN *OUTSIDER*, RIGHT? WELL, I'M GOING BACK TO TOKYO!
SO JUST TAKE ME TO THE STATION, AND I'LL GO!
HA HA HA!
SO YOU RAN AWAY, HUH?
WHAT'S FUNNY ABOUT THAT?!
YOU'RE TERRIBLE! THIS WHOLE PLACE IS TERRIBLE!
YA THINK?
WE GOT THESE HUGE TREES THOUGH.
TREES ARE NOTHING TO BE PROUD OF!
YOU BACK-COUNTRY HICK!
THERE AREN'T ANY CLOTHING BOUTIQUES AT ALL! EVEN YOUR CONVENIENCE STORES CLOSE BY 10 PM!
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT! I'M LOOKING DOWN ON YOU!

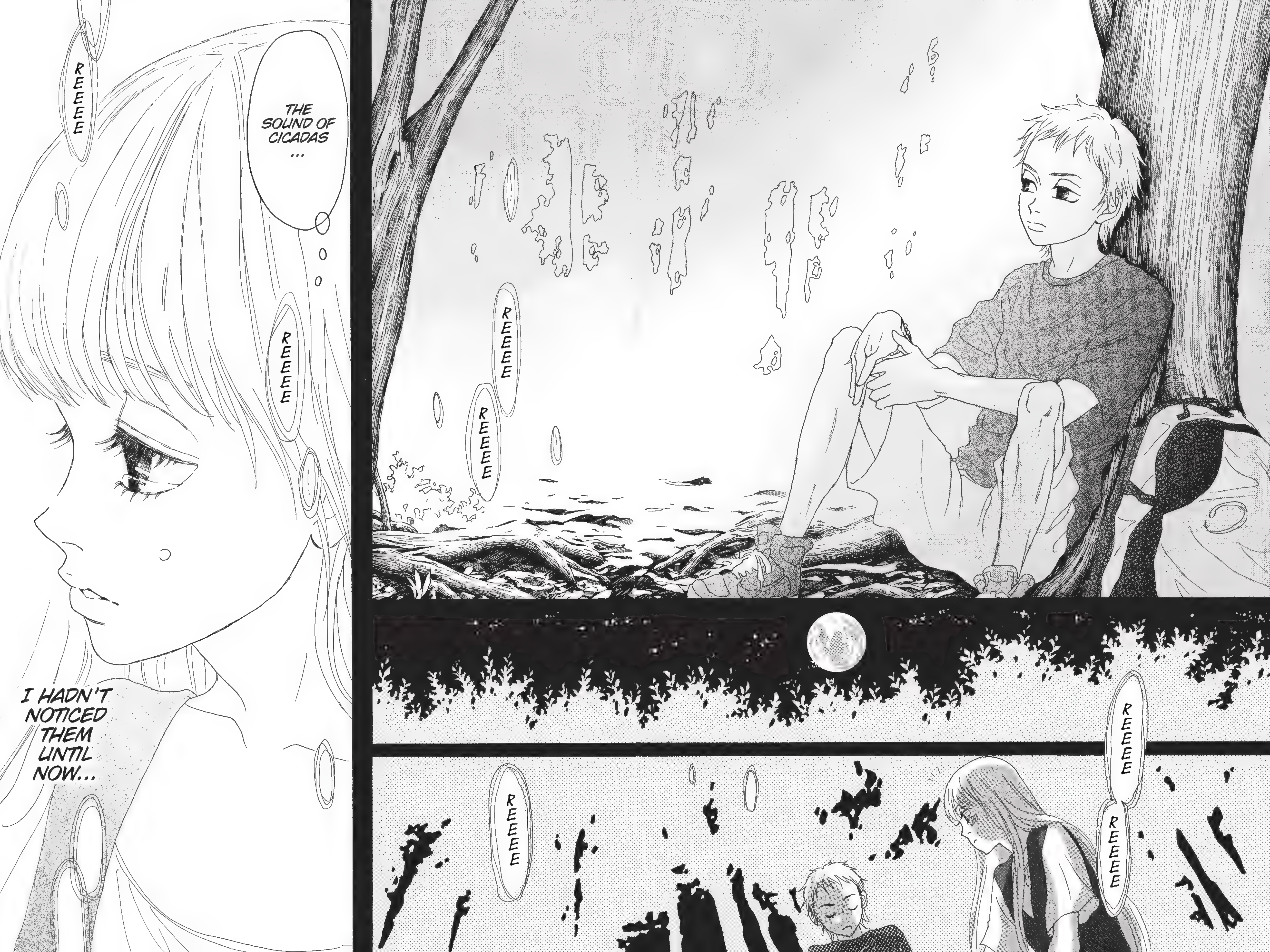

EVEN WHEN I THOUGHT I'D FOUND GOOD PEOPLE, THEY SAID AWFUL THINGS BEHIND MY BACK!
I NEVER KNEW COUNTRY FOLK WERE SO OUTRIGHT MEAN!
WAIT A MINUTE...
THE MORE I SAY...
YEAH, I'M AN OUTSIDER! I NEVER WANT TO BE ONE OF YOU UNCOOL PEOPLE!
...THE MORE I SOUND LIKE AN IDIOT.
URGH...

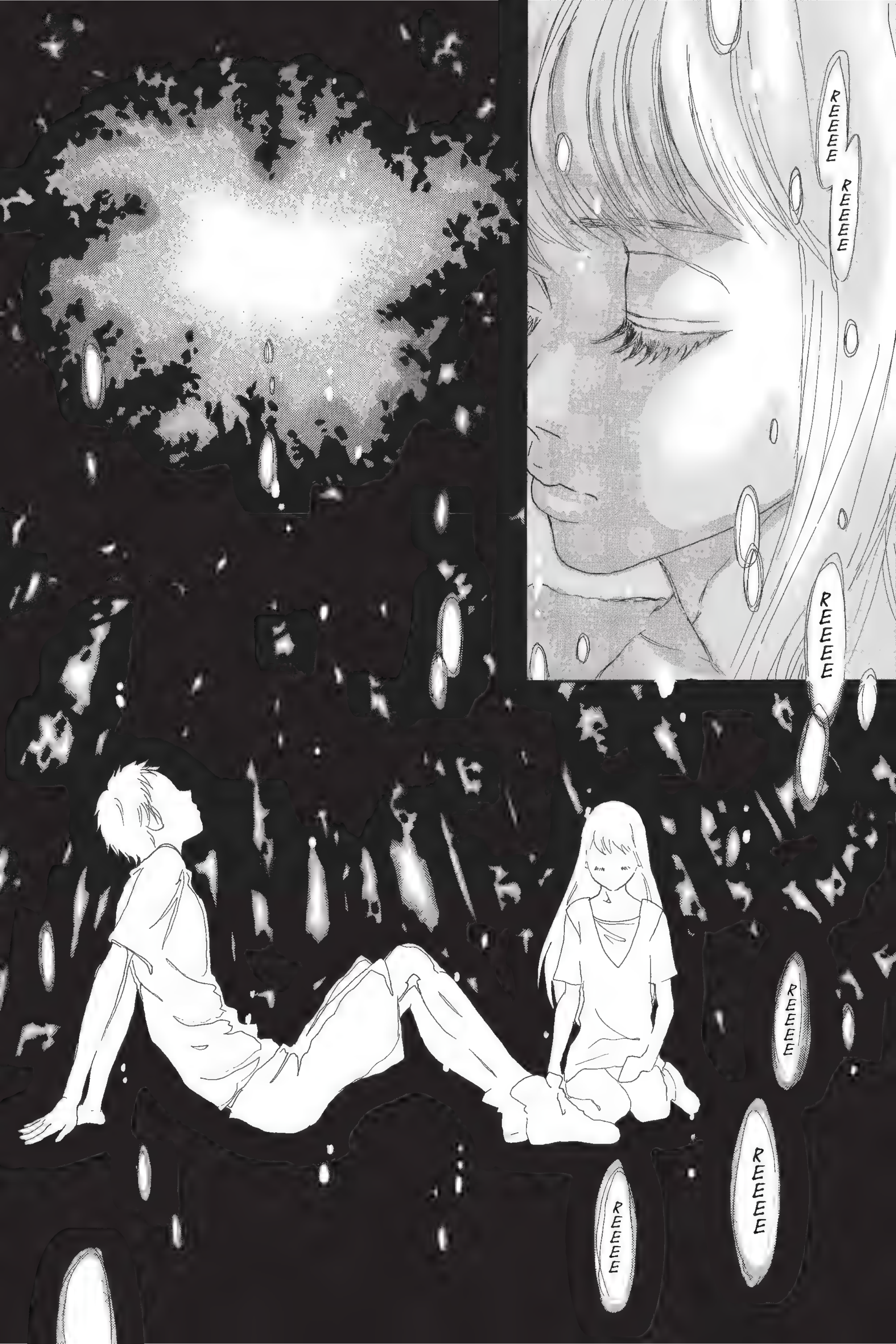

WAAAH!
I HATE IT! I HATE IT! I JUST HATE IT!
WAAAH!
WAAAH!

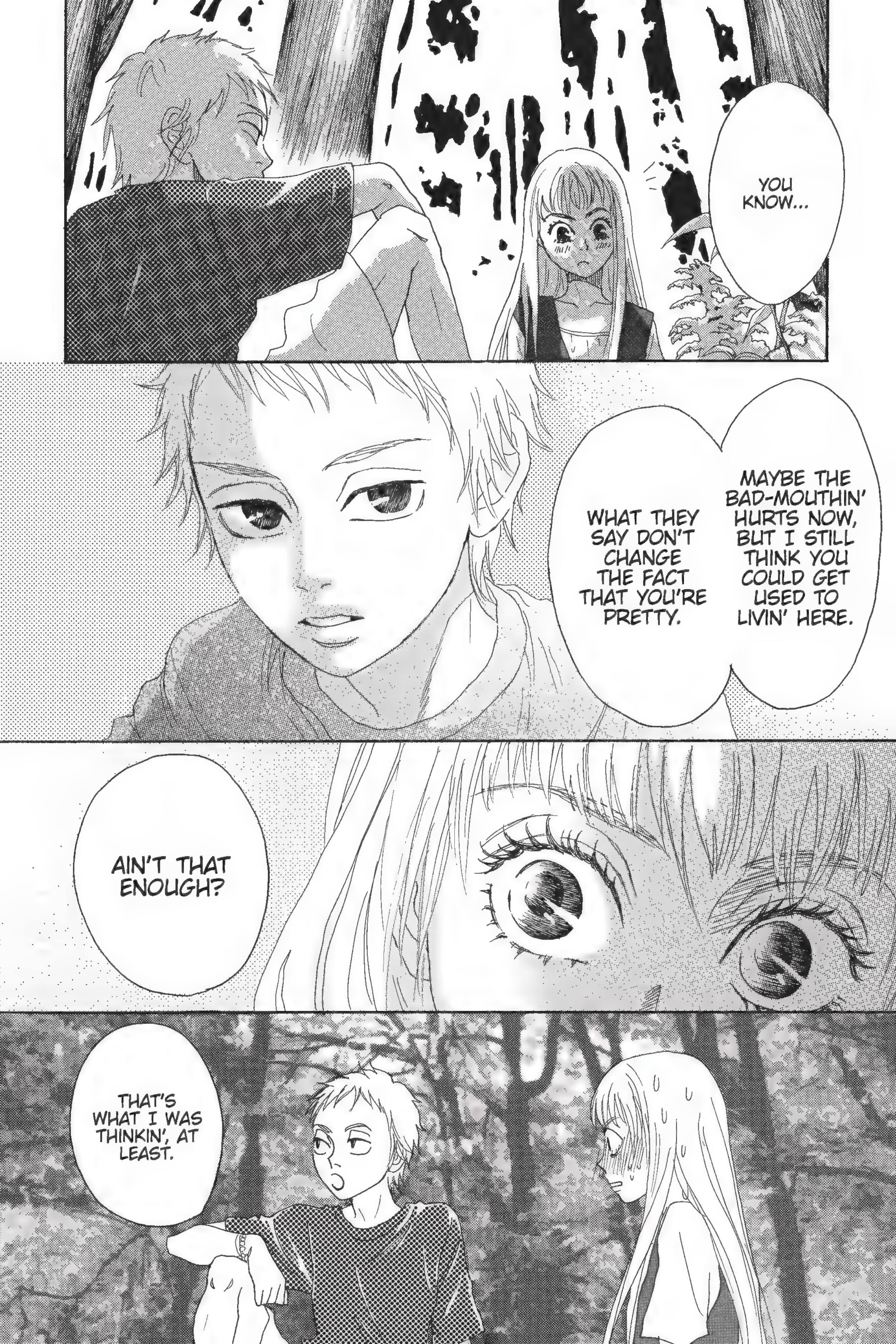

...
HAH...
WAH...
...
...OKAY.
I GET IT.

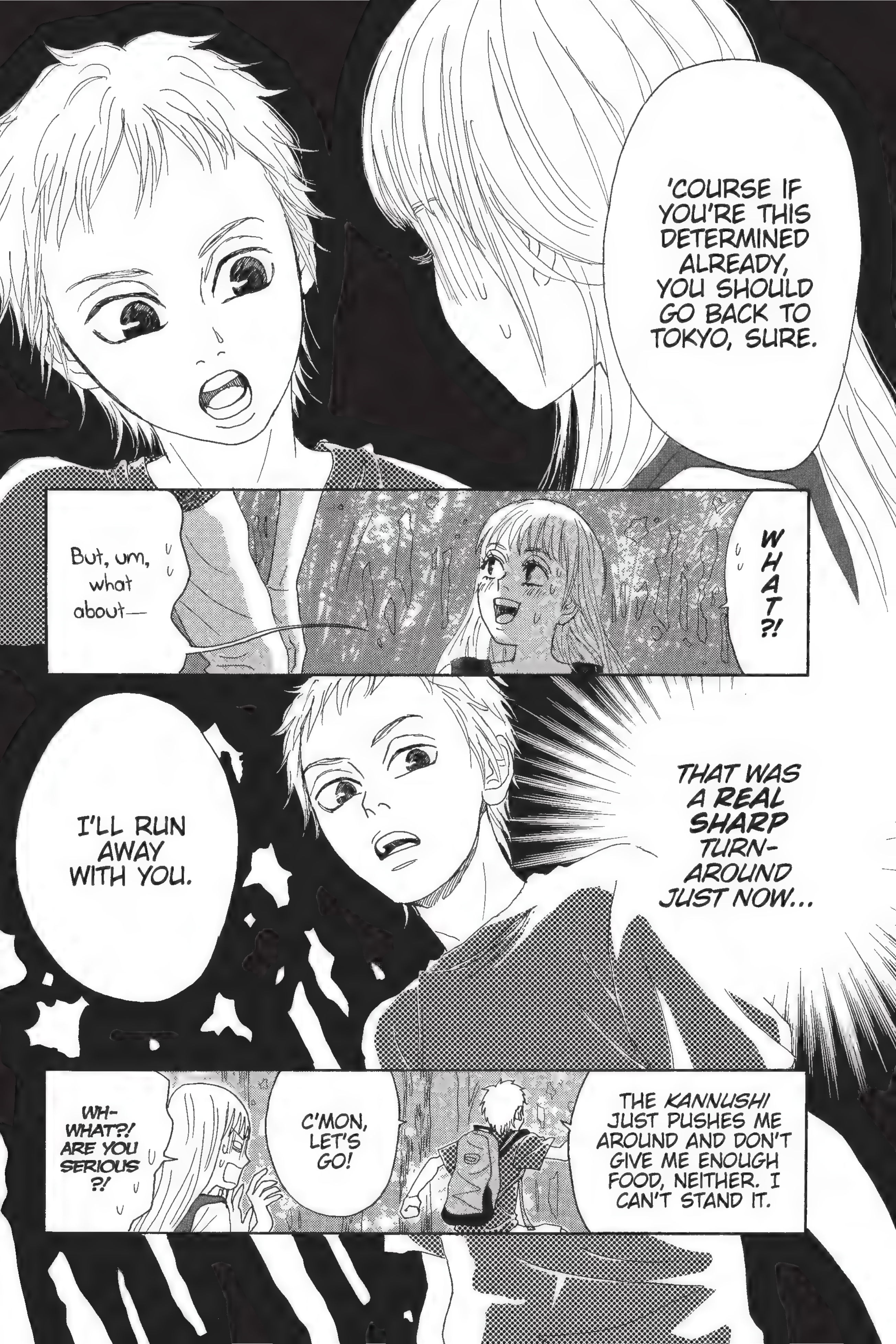

YOU'RE HUNGRY, RIGHT?
WHAT THE HELL?! OF COURSE NOT!
ARE YOU STUPID OR SOMETHING?!
うわー
WAAH!
AND ANYWAY, THANKS TO ALL YOUR BAD-MOUTHING REPORTS, I LOST MY APPETITE!
IZZAT SO.
WELL, I'M EATING.
I got these seven-ingredient rice balls...
SO YOU'RE THE HUNGRY ONE!
CHEW CHEW
URGH...
SNIFF SNIFF
しくしく
One more.
SNIFF SNIFF
しくしく
...
...MAY I?
SNIFF SNIFF
しくしく
HERE.


...
SOB
HIC
HIC
WHERE DID THESE COME FROM, ANYWAY? DID YOU MAKE THEM?
YUP.
THEY LOOK WEIRD!
SHUT UP AND EAT!
MMPH!
JUST EAT!
CHEW CHEW
HAVE SOME TEA!
GULP
GULP
...
SNIFF
ずびっ


REEEE
REEEE
REEEE
REEEE
REEEE
THE SOUND OF CICADAS...
REEEE
REEEE
I HADN'T NOTICED THEM UNTIL NOW...

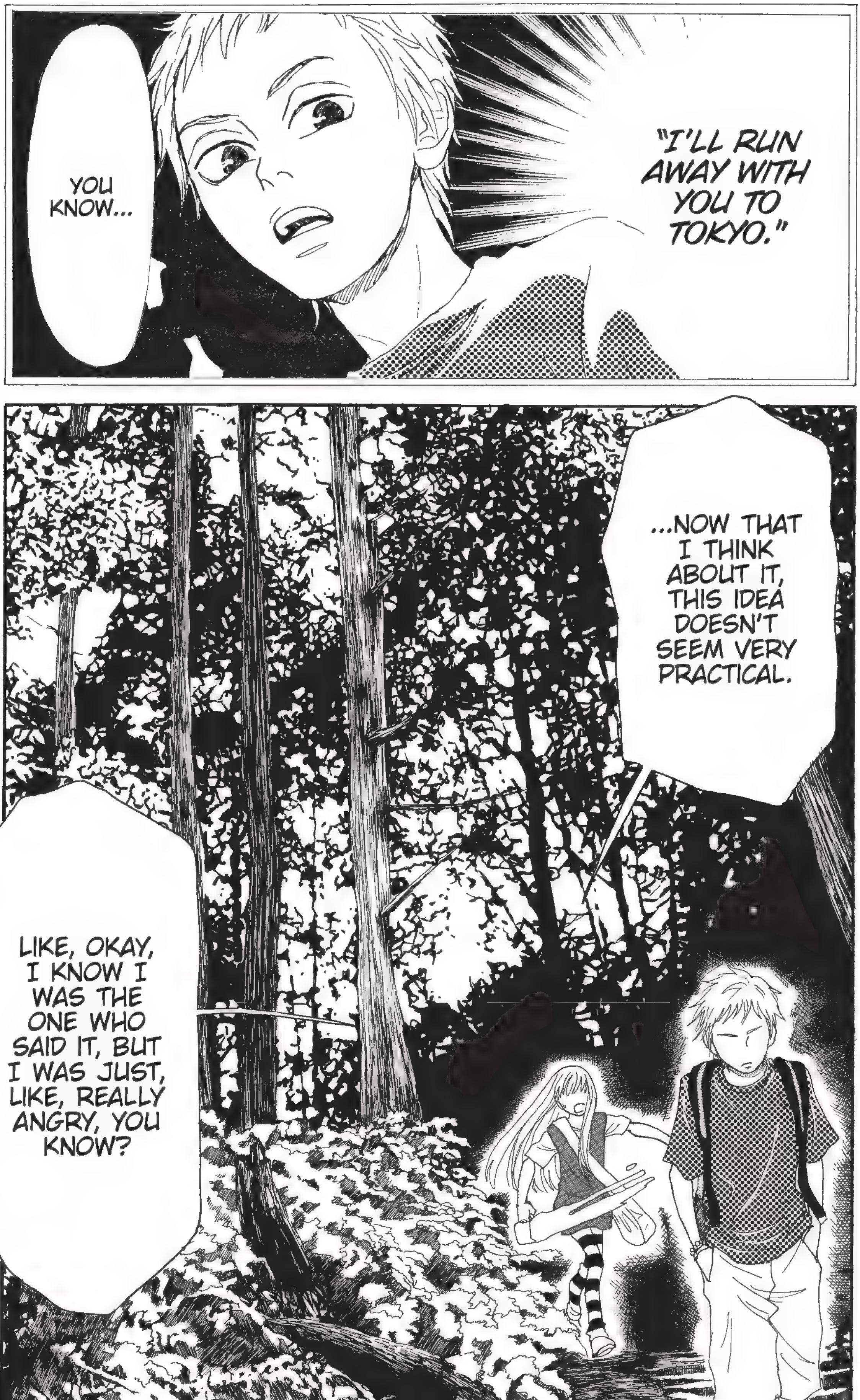

REEEE
REEEE
REEEE
REEEE
REEEE
REEEE

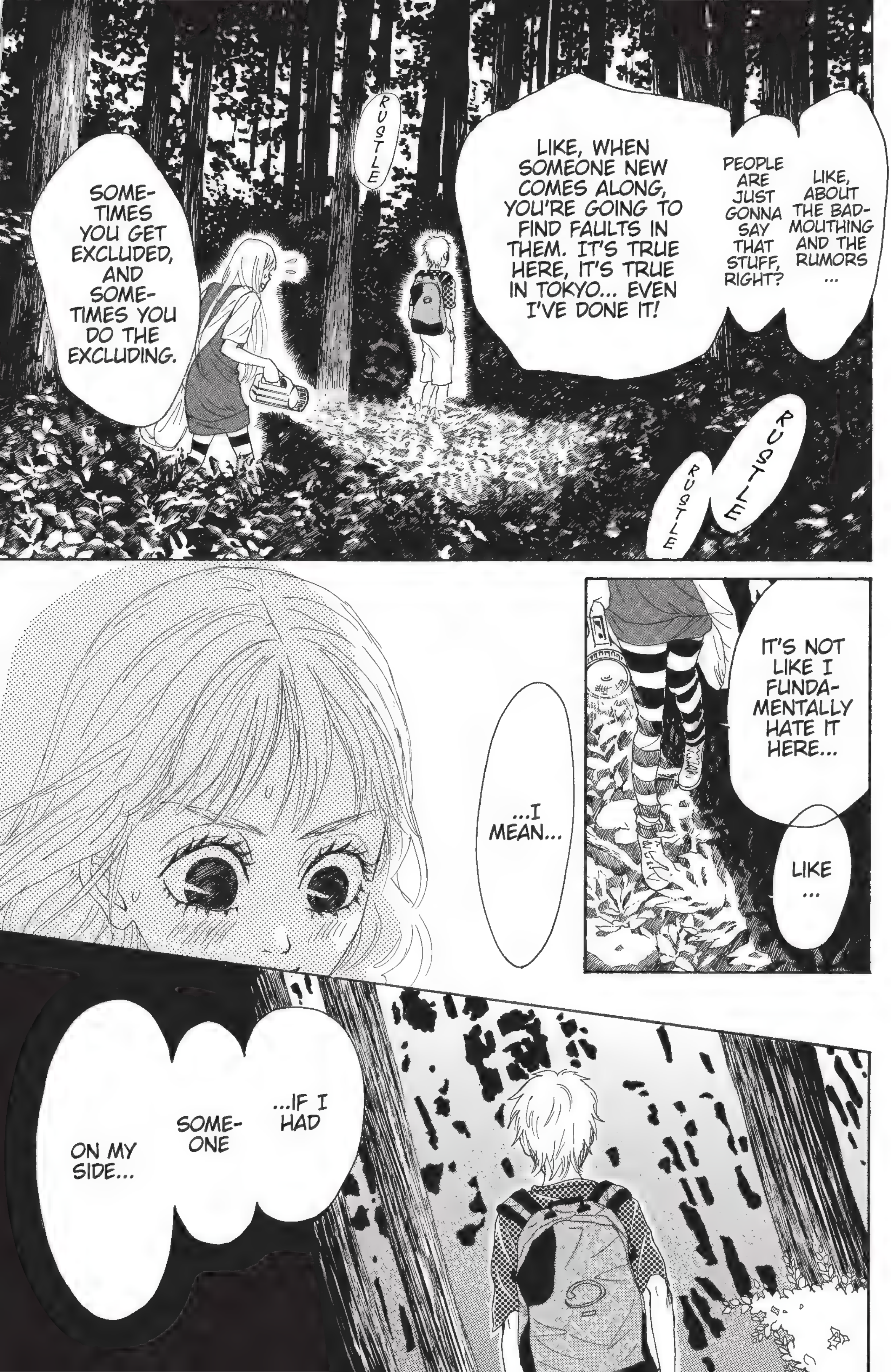

YOU KNOW...
MAYBE THE BAD-MOUTHIN' HURTS NOW, BUT I STILL THINK YOU COULD GET USED TO LIVIN' HERE.
WHAT THEY SAY DON'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT YOU'RE PRETTY.
AIN'T THAT ENOUGH?
THAT'S WHAT I WAS THINKIN', AT LEAST.

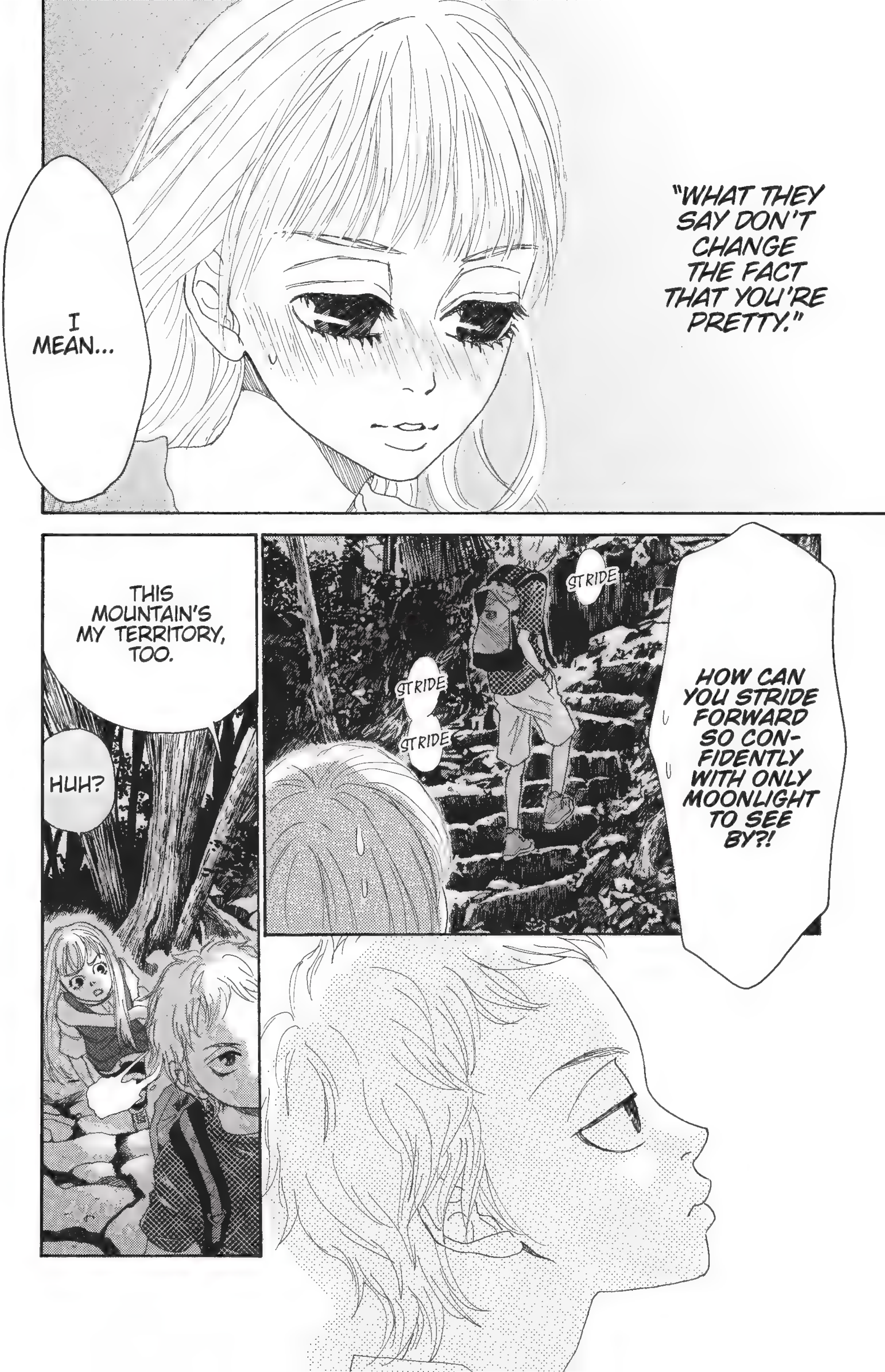

'COURSE IF YOU'RE THIS DETERMINED ALREADY, YOU SHOULD GO BACK TO TOKYO, SURE.
WHAT?!
But, um, what about—
THAT WAS A *REAL SHARP* TURN-AROUND JUST NOW...
I'LL RUN AWAY WITH YOU.
THE *KANNUSHI* JUST PUSHES ME AROUND AND DON'T GIVE ME ENOUGH FOOD, NEITHER. I CAN'T STAND IT.
C'MON, LET'S GO!
WH-WHAT?! ARE YOU SERIOUS?!

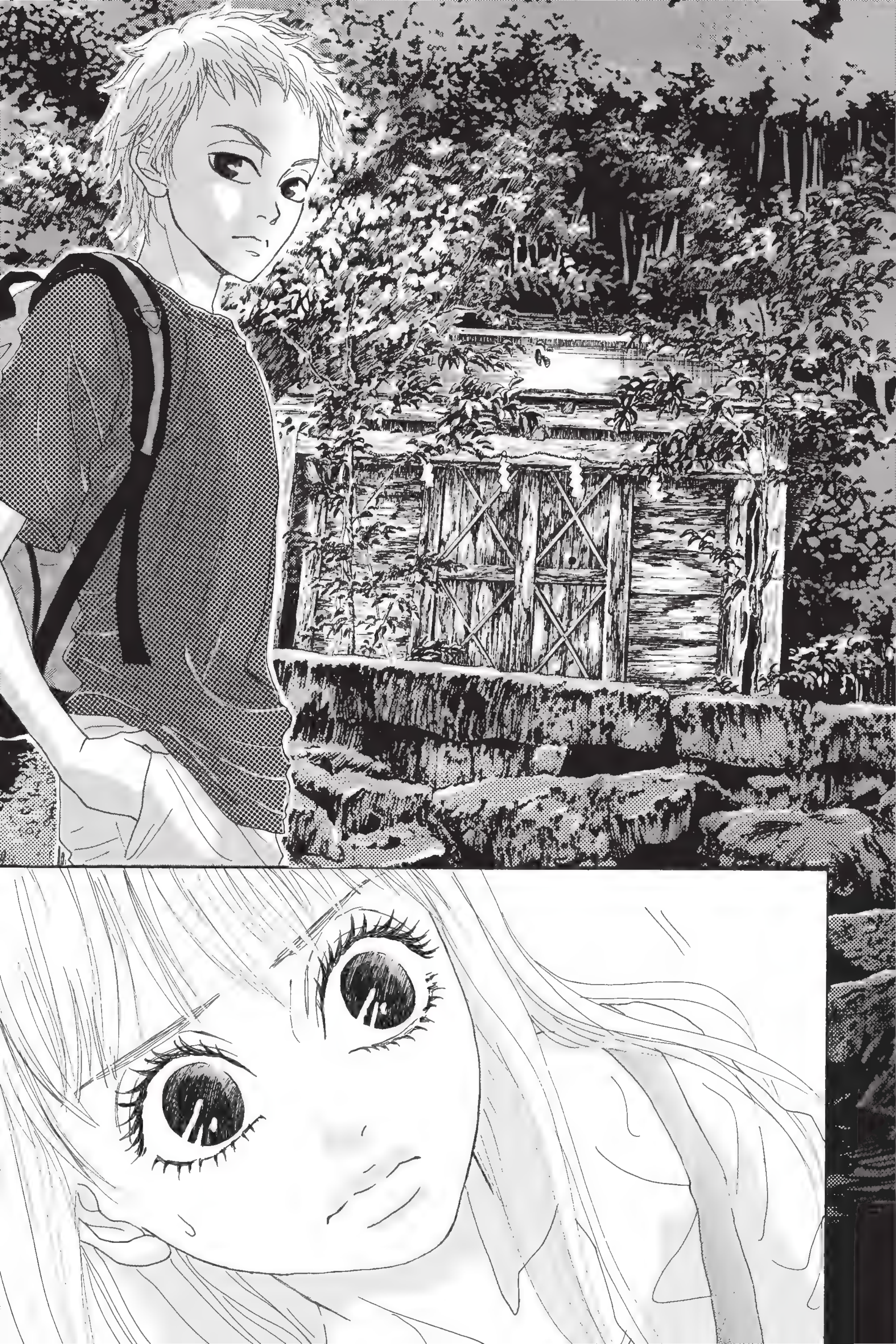
3

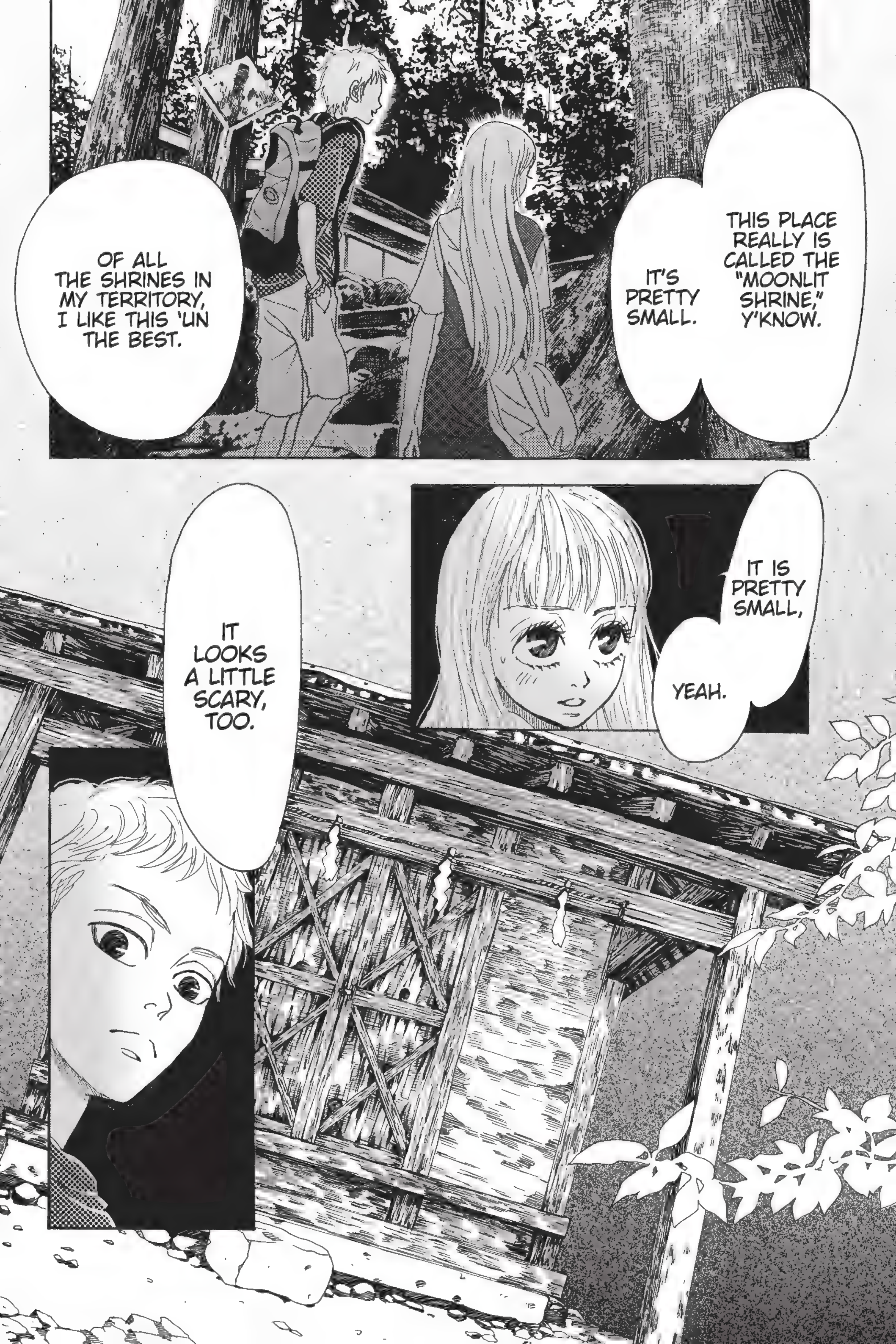
Bonds

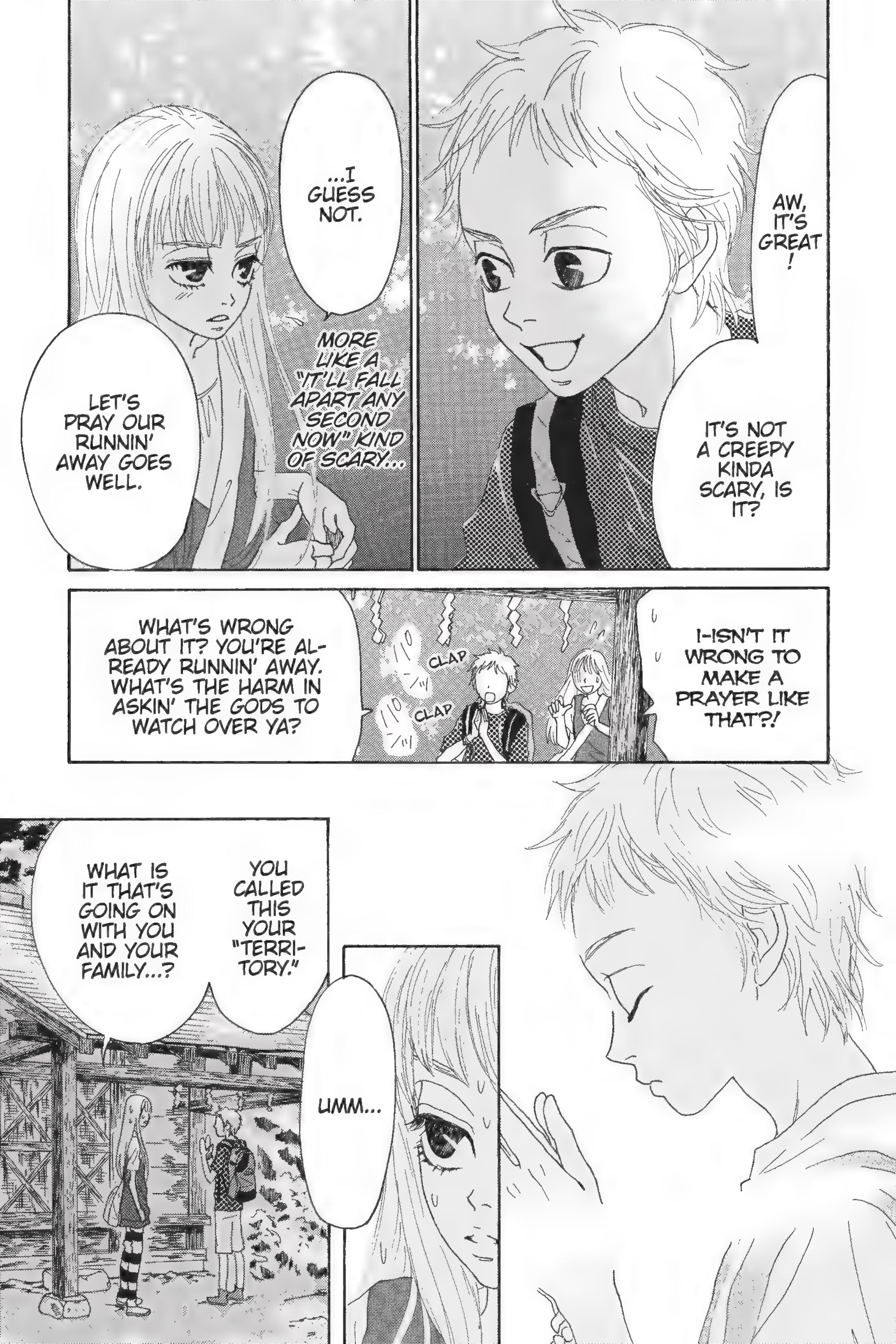

"I'LL RUN AWAY WITH YOU TO TOKYO."
YOU KNOW...
...NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, THIS IDEA DOESN'T SEEM VERY PRACTICAL.
LIKE, OKAY, I KNOW I WAS THE ONE WHO SAID IT, BUT I WAS JUST, LIKE, REALLY ANGRY, YOU KNOW?

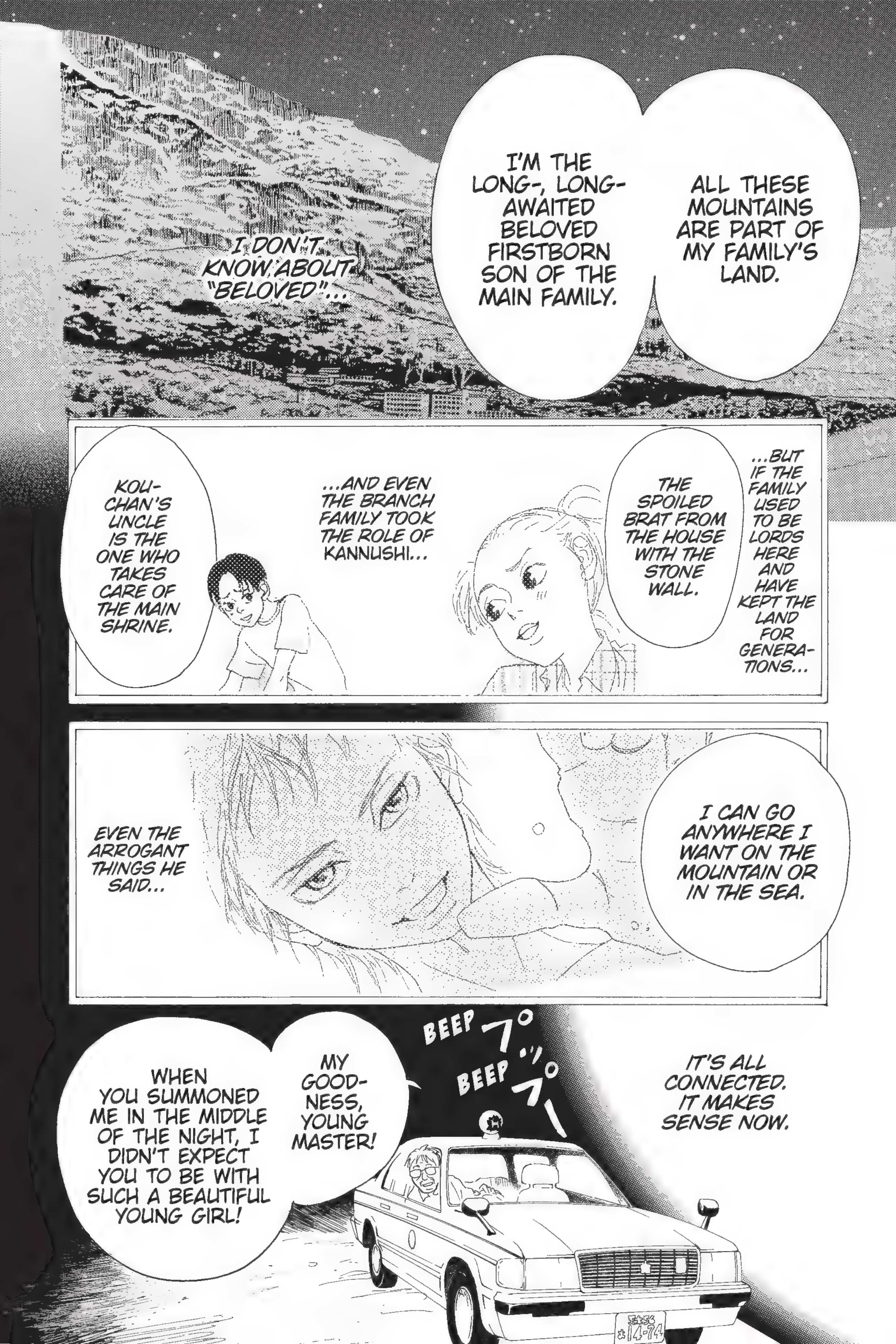

LIKE, ABOUT THE BAD-MOUTHING AND THE RUMORS ...
PEOPLE ARE JUST GONNA SAY THAT STUFF, RIGHT?
LIKE, WHEN SOMEONE NEW COMES ALONG, YOU'RE GOING TO FIND FAULTS IN THEM. IT'S TRUE HERE, IT'S TRUE IN TOKYO... EVEN I'VE DONE IT!
RUSTLE
SOMETIMES YOU GET EXCLUDED, AND SOMETIMES YOU DO THE EXCLUDING.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
IT'S NOT LIKE I FUNDAMENTALLY HATE IT HERE...
LIKE ...
...I MEAN...
...IF I HAD
SOMEONE
ON MY SIDE...

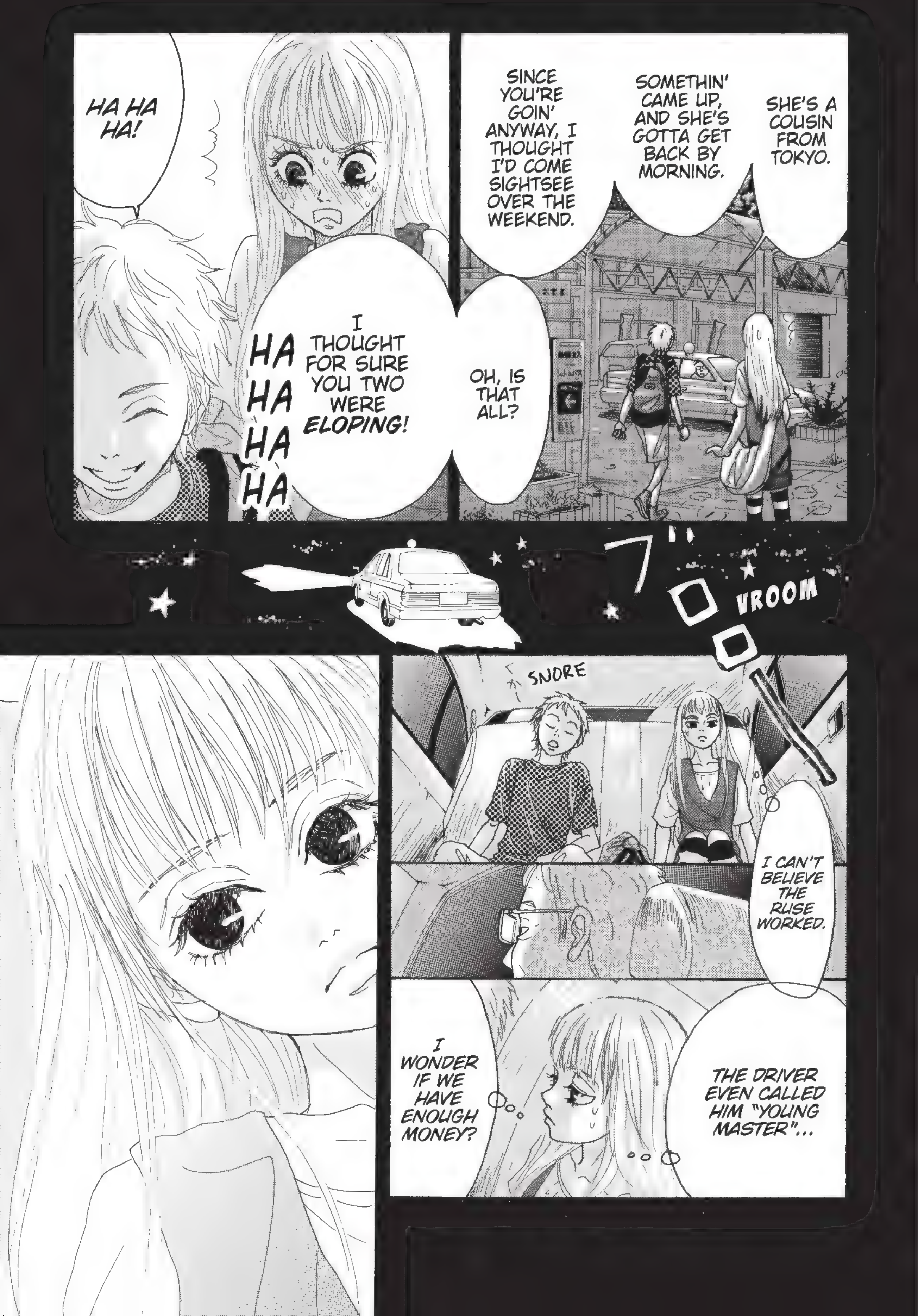

"WHAT THEY SAY DON'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT YOU'RE PRETTY."
I MEAN...
HOW CAN YOU STRIDE FORWARD SO CONFIDENTLY WITH ONLY MOONLIGHT TO SEE BY?!
STRIDE
STRIDE
STRIDE
THIS MOUNTAIN'S MY TERRITORY, TOO.
HUH?

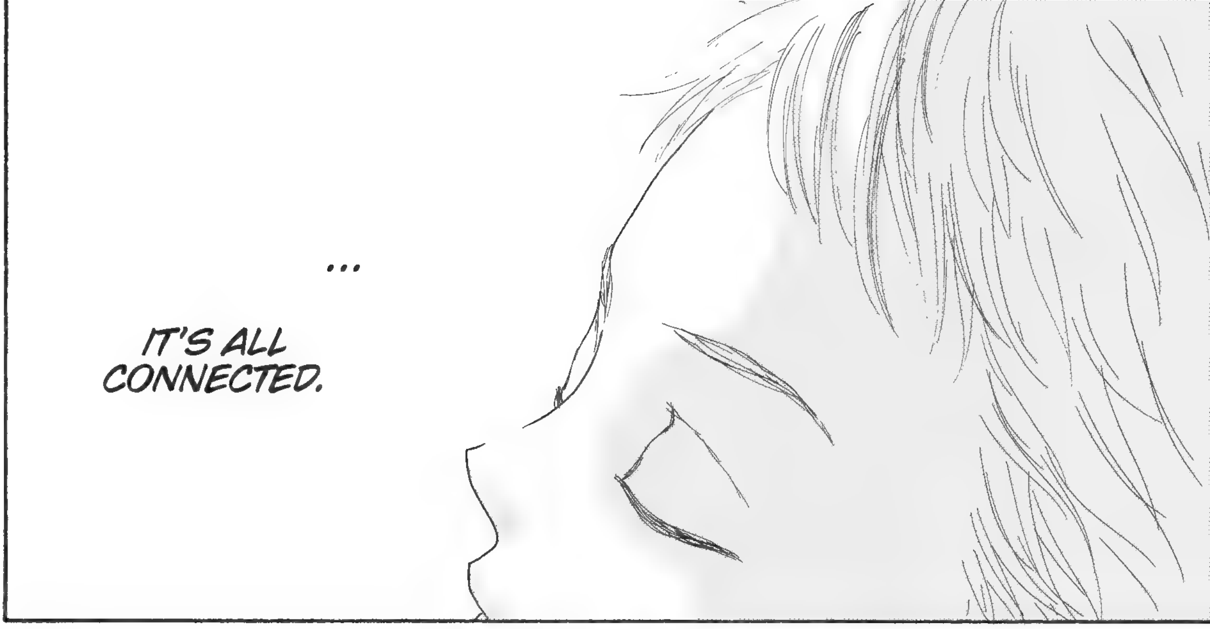



THIS PLACE REALLY IS CALLED THE "MOONLIT SHRINE," Y'KNOW.
IT'S PRETTY SMALL.
OF ALL THE SHRINES IN MY TERRITORY, I LIKE THIS 'UN THE BEST.
IT IS PRETTY SMALL,
YEAH.
IT LOOKS A LITTLE SCARY, TOO.

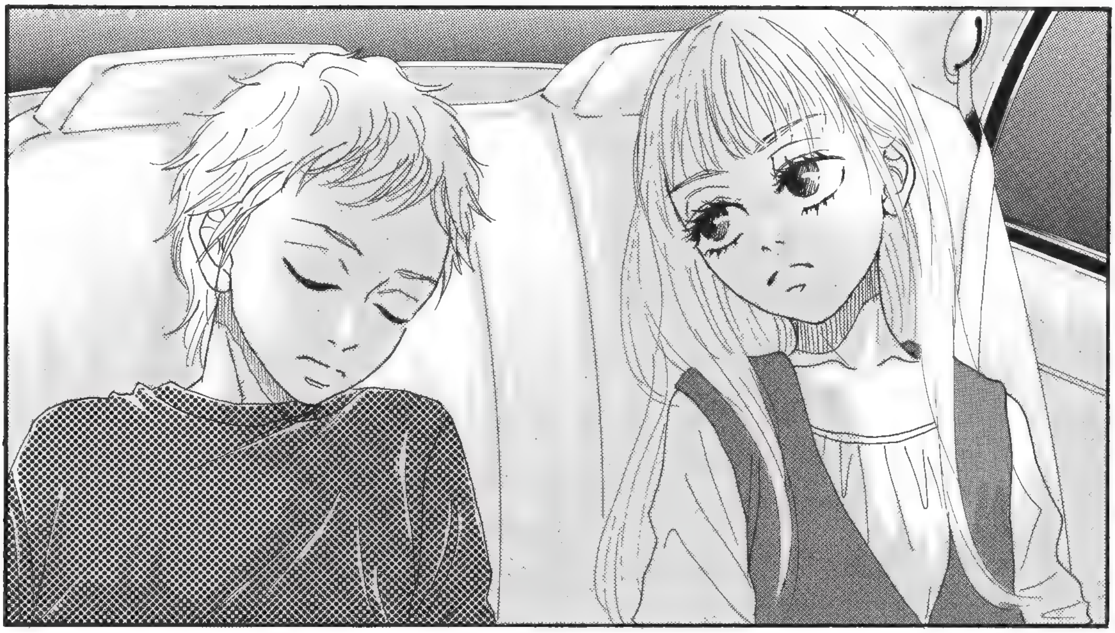

AW, IT'S GREAT!
IT'S NOT A CREEPY KINDA SCARY, IS IT?
...I GUESS NOT.
MORE LIKE A "IT'LL FALL APART ANY SECOND NOW" KIND OF SCARY...
LET'S PRAY OUR RUNNIN' AWAY GOES WELL.
I-ISN'T IT WRONG TO MAKE A PRAYER LIKE THAT?!
CLAP
CLAP
WHAT'S WRONG ABOUT IT? YOU'RE ALREADY RUNNIN' AWAY. WHAT'S THE HARM IN ASKIN' THE GODS TO WATCH OVER YA?
YOU CALLED THIS YOUR "TERRITORY."
WHAT IS IT THAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY...?
UMM...


ALL THESE MOUNTAINS ARE PART OF MY FAMILY'S LAND.
I'M THE LONG-, LONG-AWAITED BELOVED FIRSTBORN SON OF THE MAIN FAMILY.
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT "BELOVED"...
...BUT IF THE FAMILY USED TO BE LORDS HERE AND HAVE KEPT THE LAND FOR GENERATIONS...
THE SPOILED BRAT FROM THE HOUSE WITH THE STONE WALL.
...AND EVEN THE BRANCH FAMILY TOOK THE ROLE OF KANNUSHI...
KOU-CHAN'S UNCLE IS THE ONE WHO TAKES CARE OF THE MAIN SHRINE.
I CAN GO ANYWHERE I WANT ON THE MOUNTAIN OR IN THE SEA.
EVEN THE ARROGANT THINGS HE SAID...
IT'S ALL CONNECTED. IT MAKES SENSE NOW.
BEEP
BEEP
プップー
MY GOODNESS, YOUNG MASTER!
WHEN YOU SUMMONED ME IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BE WITH SUCH A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG GIRL!
14-74


SHE'S A COUSIN FROM TOKYO.
SOMETHIN' CAME UP, AND SHE'S GOTTA GET BACK BY MORNING.
SINCE YOU'RE GOIN' ANYWAY, I THOUGHT I'D COME SIGHTSEE OVER THE WEEKEND.
OH, IS THAT ALL?
I THOUGHT FOR SURE YOU TWO WERE *ELOPING!*
HA HA HA!
HA HA HA HA
ブロロ
VROOM
ぐかー
SNORE
I CAN'T BELIEVE THE RUSE WORKED.
THE DRIVER EVEN CALLED HIM "YOUNG MASTER"...
I WONDER IF WE HAVE ENOUGH MONEY?

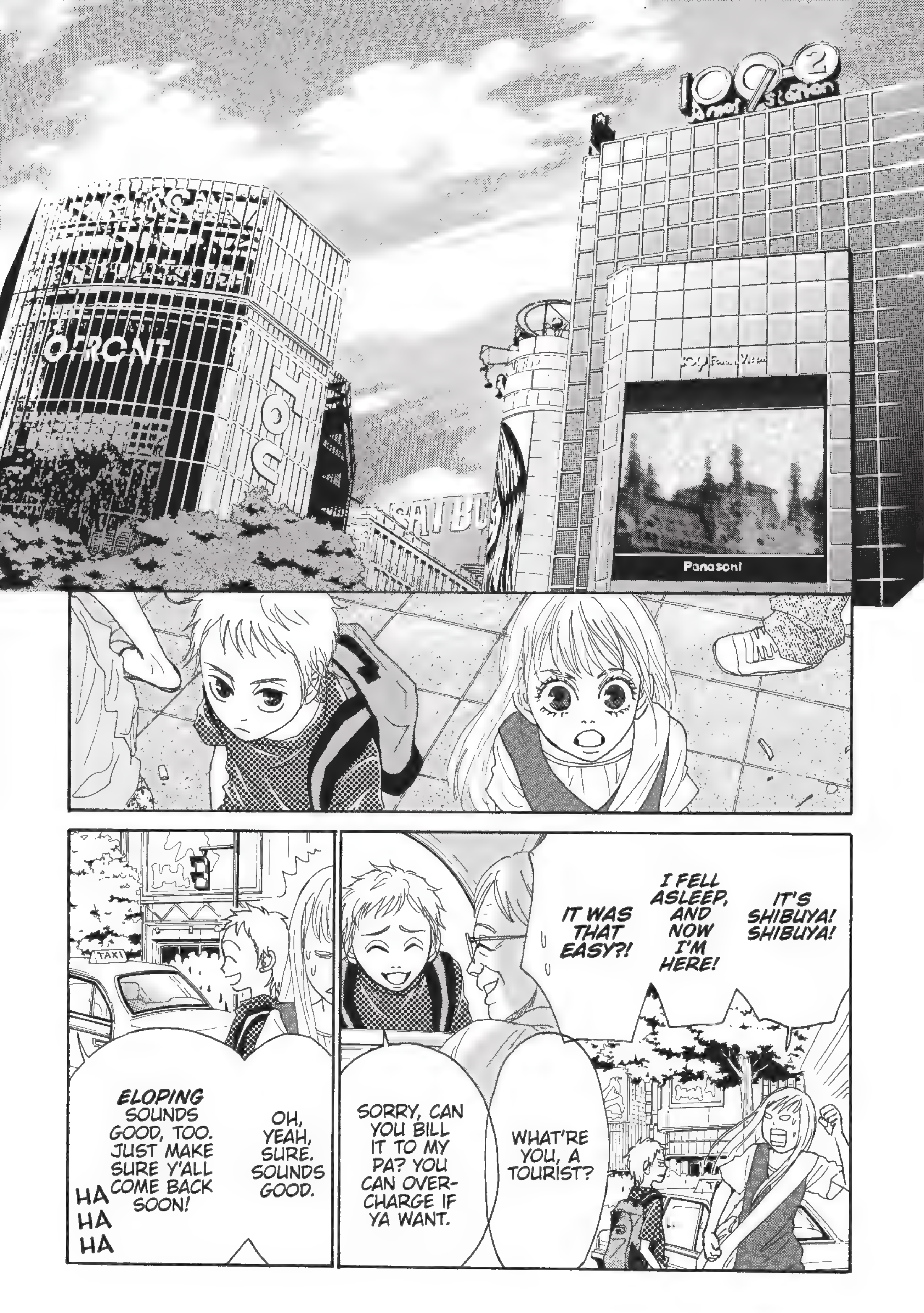

...
IT'S ALL CONNECTED.

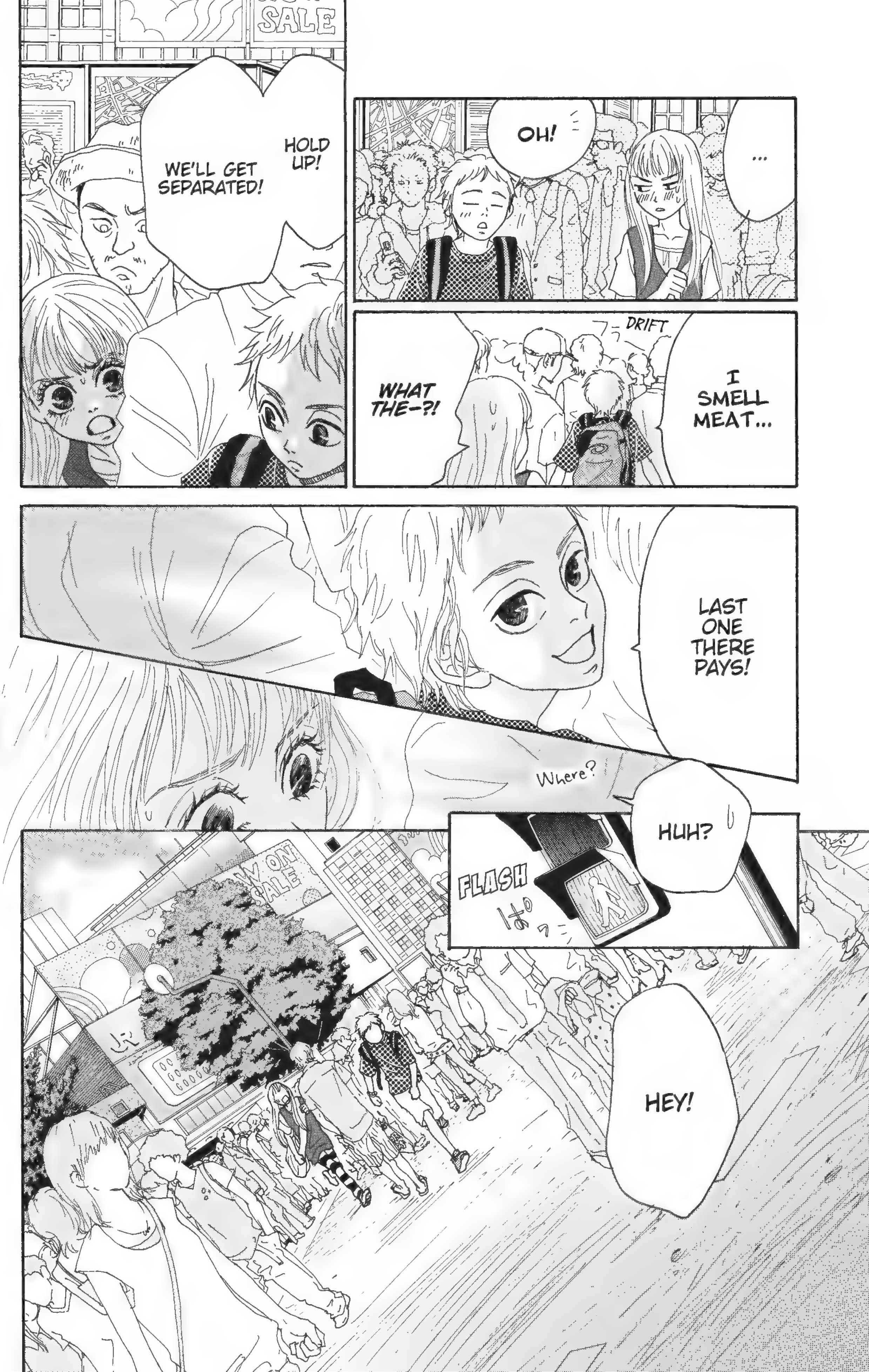
THE BOY WATCHES OVER AND PROTECTS THIS LAND...

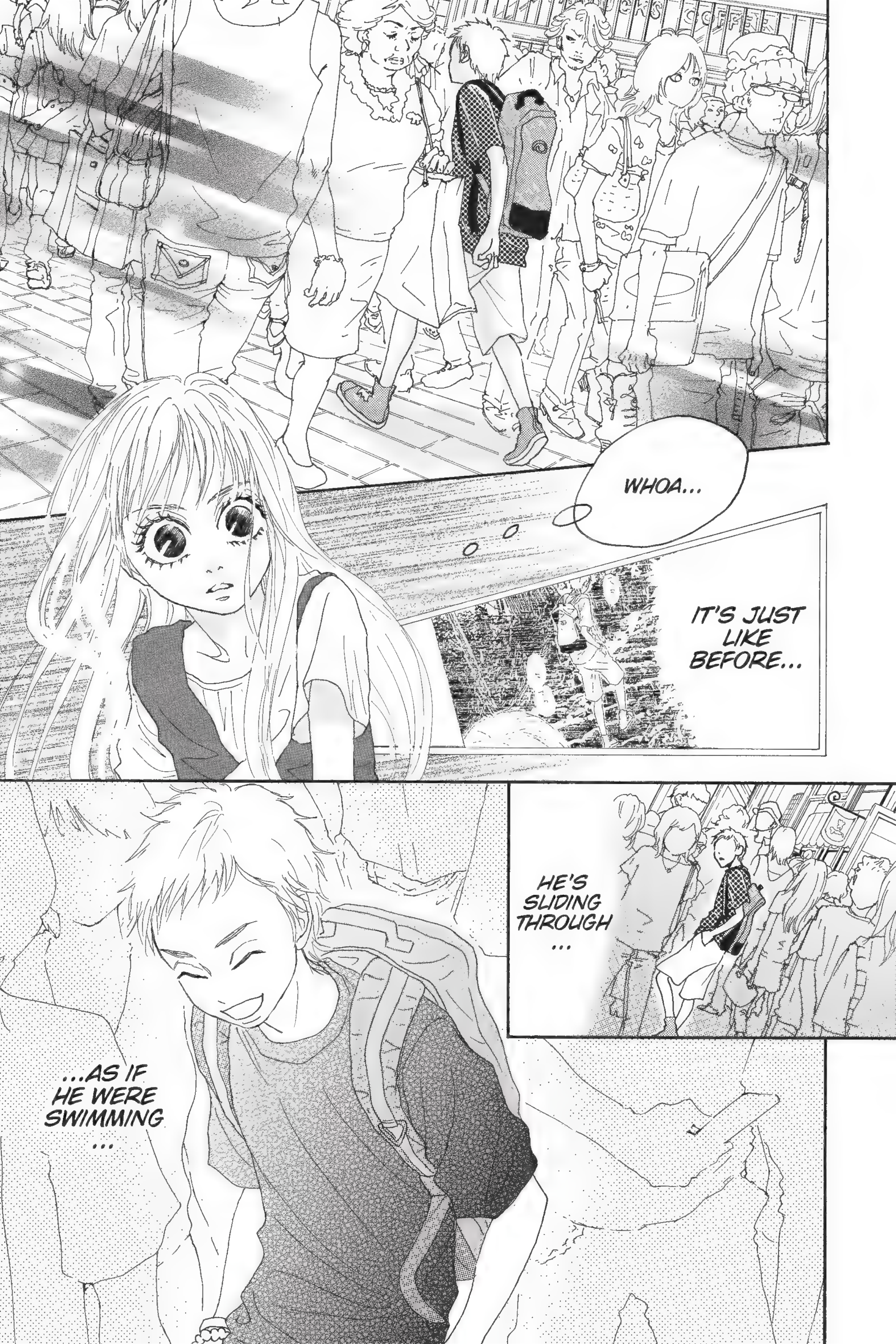


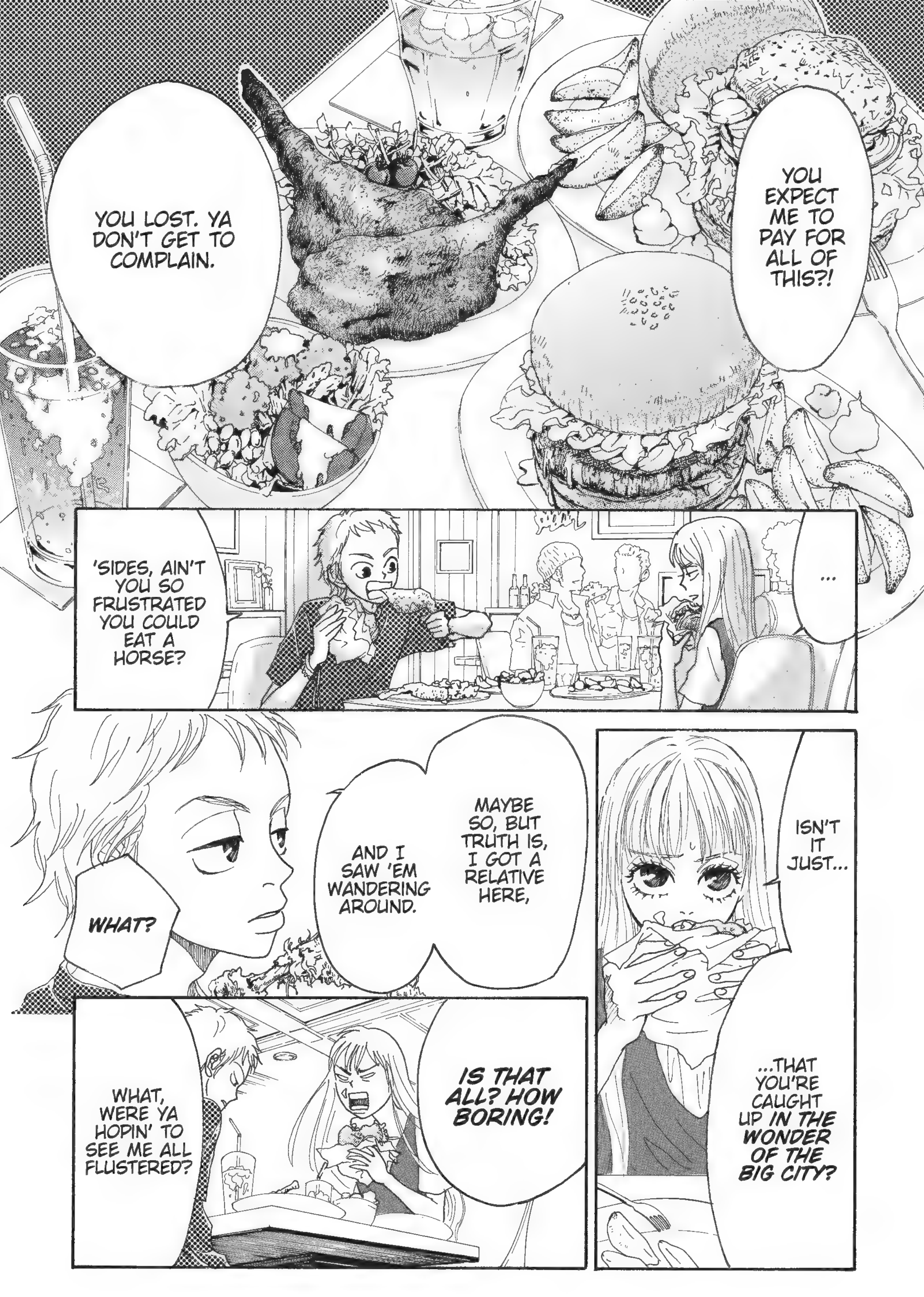
IF THAT'S THE REASON IT LOOKS LIKE HE GLOWS...

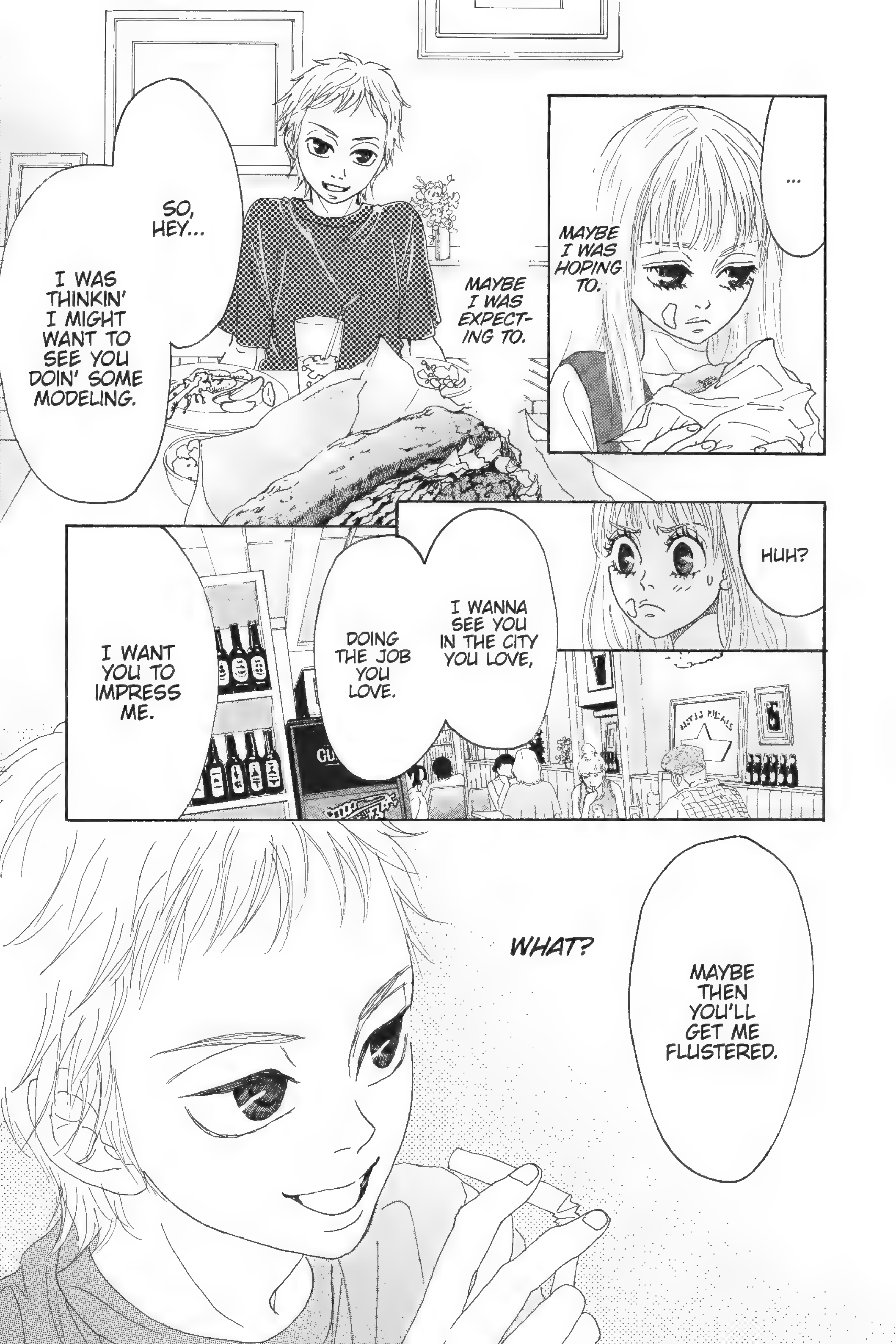
...THEN I'D LIKE TO SEE HOW HE LOOKS OUTSIDE HIS TERRITORY, HERE IN TOKYO.

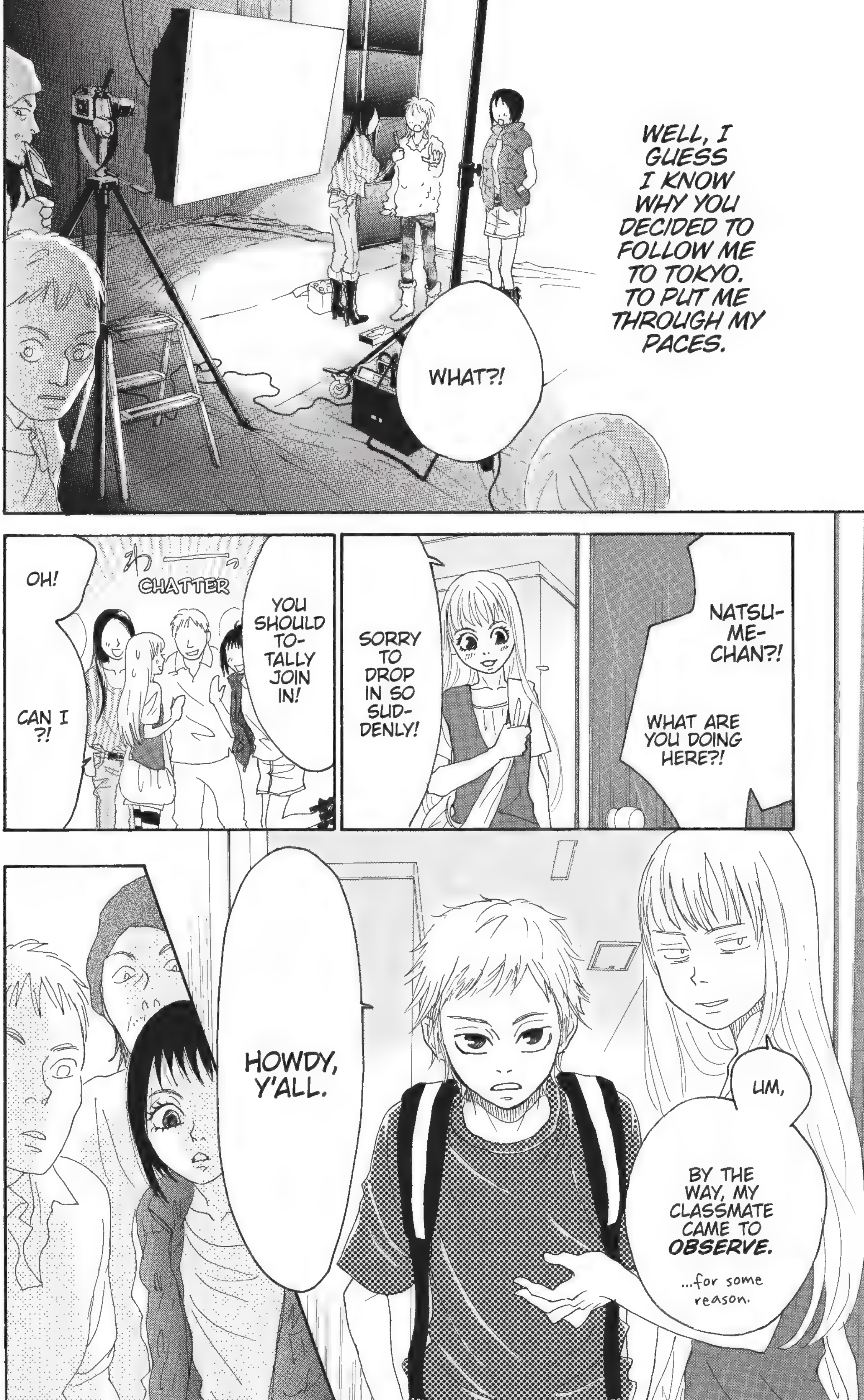

109-2
Panasoni
IT'S SHIBUYA! SHIBUYA!
I FELL ASLEEP, AND NOW I'M HERE!
IT WAS THAT EASY?!
WHAT'RE YOU, A TOURIST?
SORRY, CAN YOU BILL IT TO MY PA? YOU CAN OVER-CHARGE IF YA WANT.
OH, YEAH, SURE. SOUNDS GOOD.
ELOPING SOUNDS GOOD, TOO. JUST MAKE SURE Y'ALL COME BACK SOON!
HA HA HA
TAXI

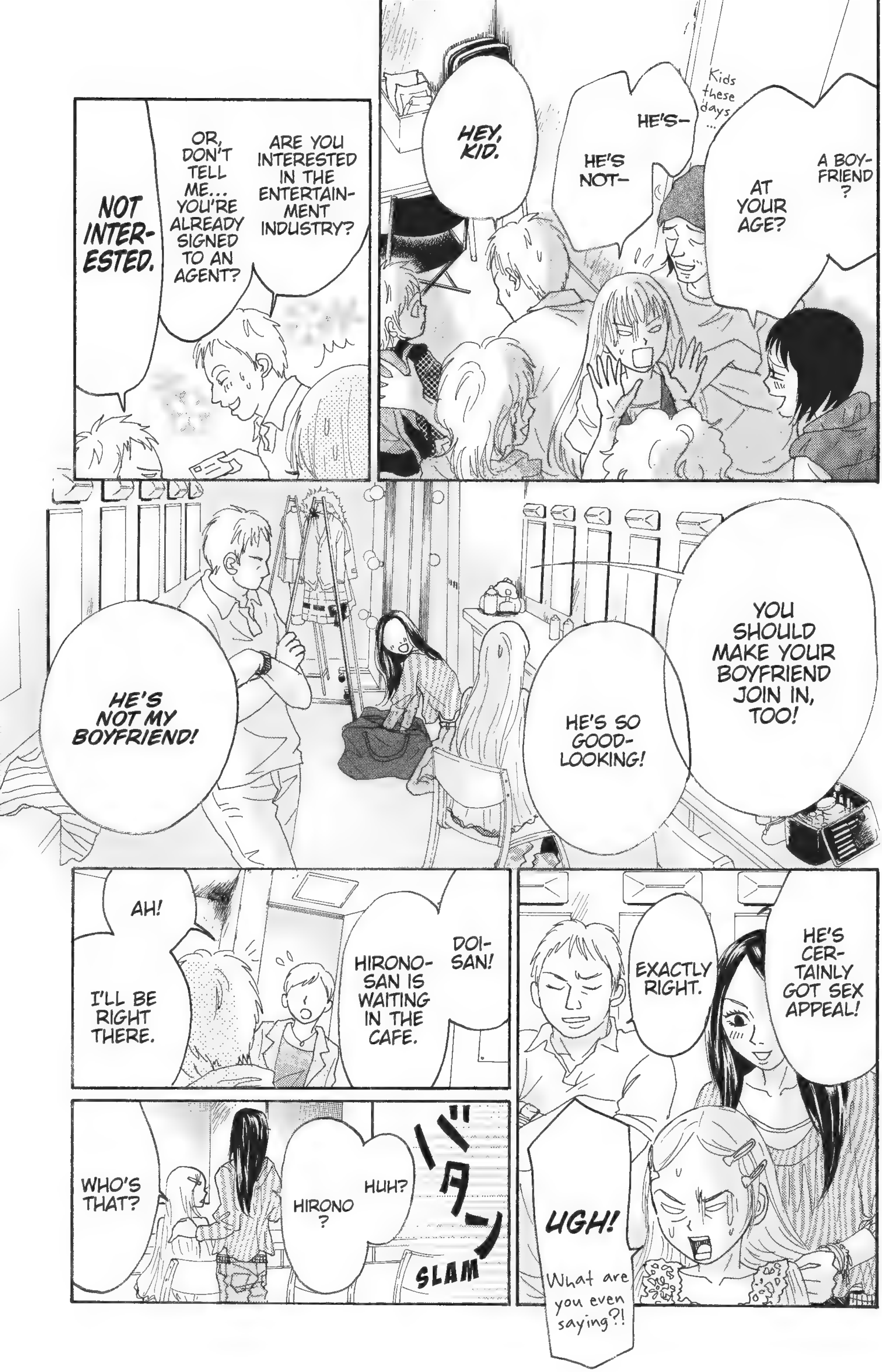

OH!
...
DRIFT
I SMELL MEAT...
WHAT THE-?!
HOLD UP!
WE'LL GET SEPARATED!
SALE
LAST ONE THERE PAYS!
Where?
HUH?
FLASH
ON SALE
HEY!

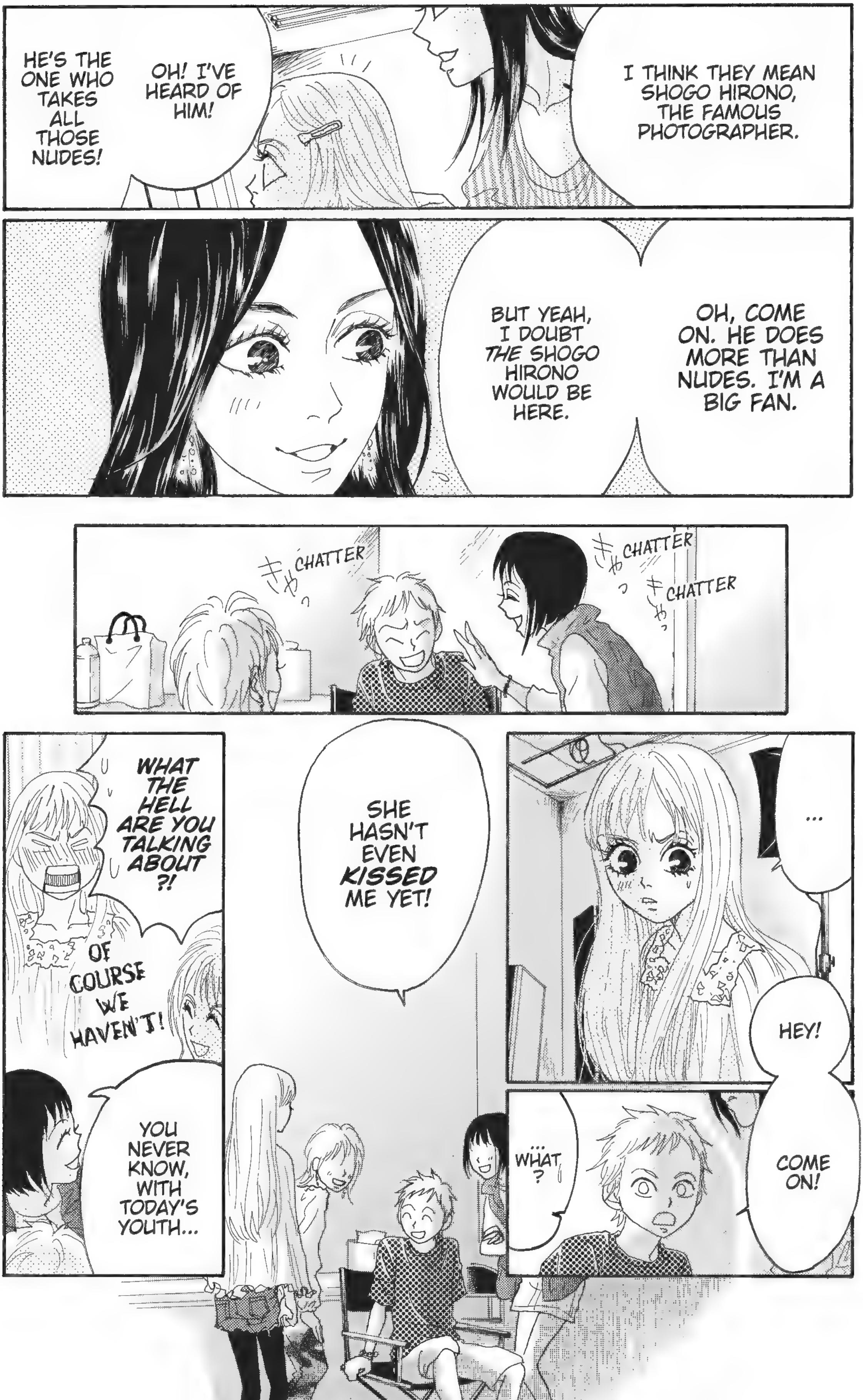

WHOA...
IT'S JUST LIKE BEFORE...
HE'S SLIDING THROUGH...
...AS IF HE WERE SWIMMING...

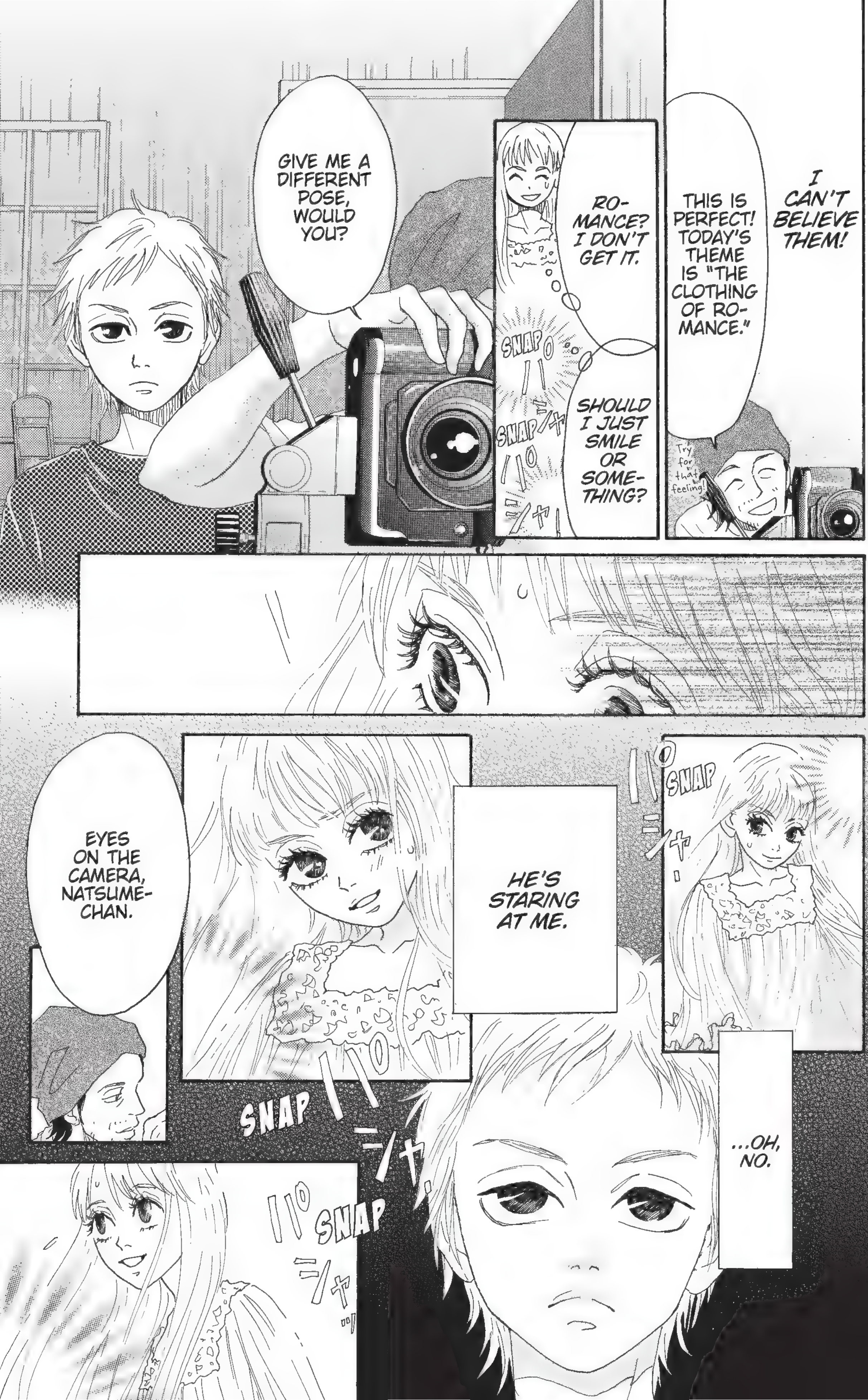

YOU EXPECT ME TO PAY FOR ALL OF THIS?!
YOU LOST. YA DON'T GET TO COMPLAIN.
...
'SIDES, AIN'T YOU SO FRUSTRATED YOU COULD EAT A HORSE?
ISN'T IT JUST...
...THAT YOU'RE CAUGHT UP *IN THE WONDER OF THE BIG CITY?*
WHAT?
MAYBE SO, BUT TRUTH IS, I GOT A RELATIVE HERE,
AND I SAW 'EM WANDERING AROUND.
IS THAT ALL? HOW BORING!
WHAT, WERE YA HOPIN' TO SEE ME ALL FLUSTERED?

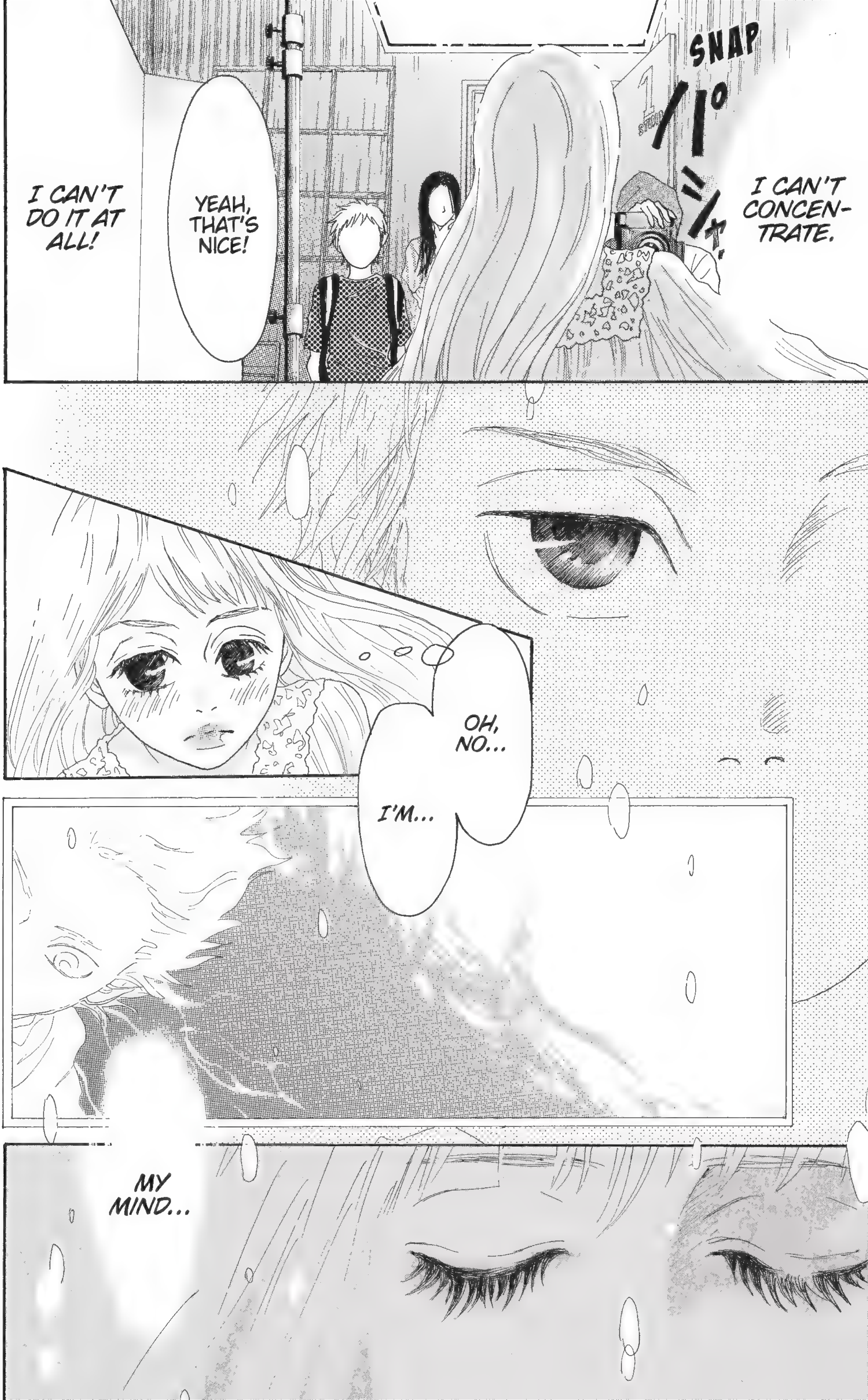

SO, HEY...
I WAS THINKIN' I MIGHT WANT TO SEE YOU DOIN' SOME MODELING.
MAYBE I WAS EXPECTING TO.
...
MAYBE I WAS HOPING TO.
HUH?
I WANNA SEE YOU IN THE CITY YOU LOVE,
DOING THE JOB YOU LOVE.
I WANT YOU TO IMPRESS ME.
WHAT?
MAYBE THEN YOU'LL GET ME FLUSTERED.

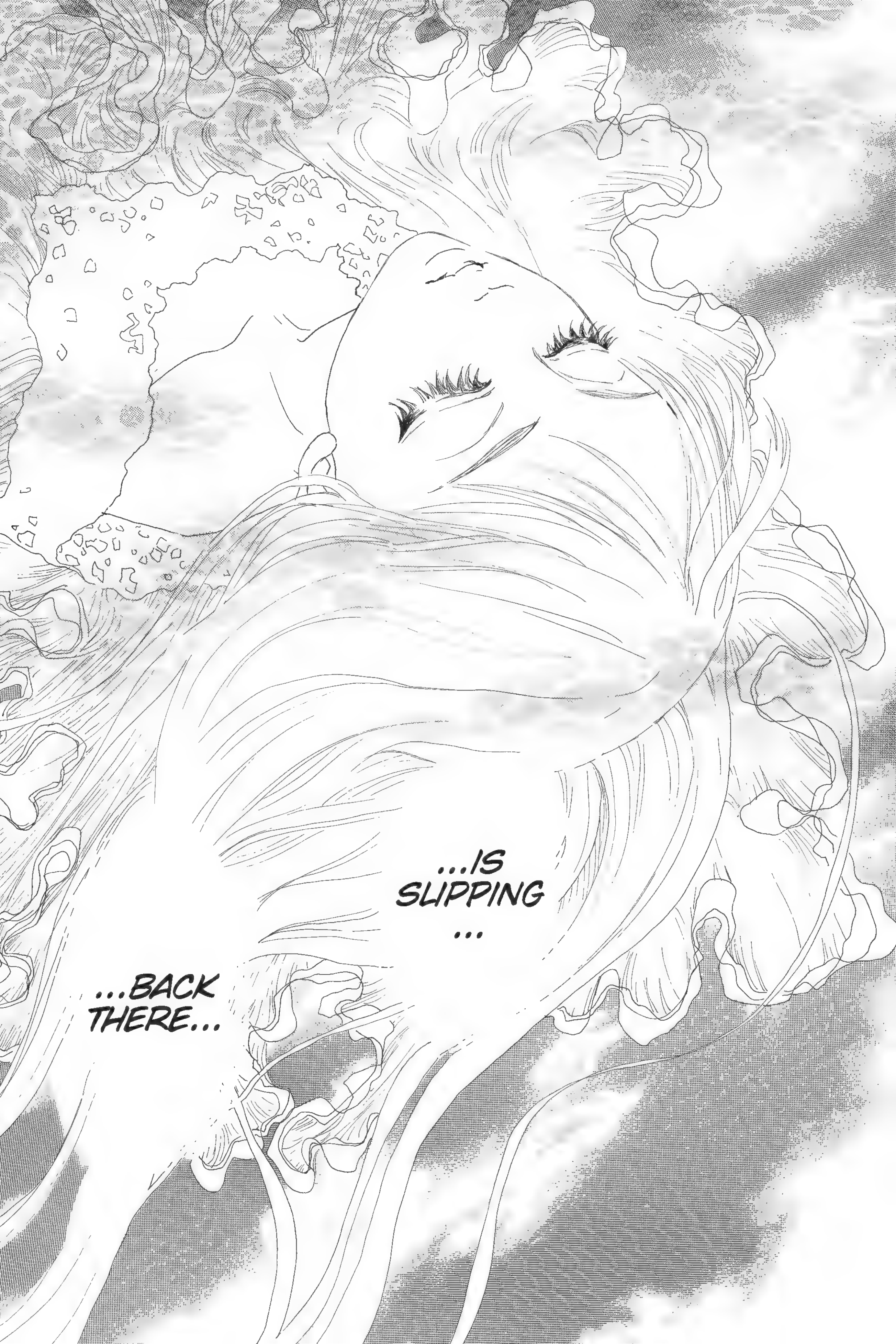

WELL, I GUESS I KNOW WHY YOU DECIDED TO FOLLOW ME TO TOKYO. TO PUT ME THROUGH MY PACES.
WHAT?!
NATSUME-CHAN?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
SORRY TO DROP IN SO SUDDENLY!
YOU SHOULD TOTALLY JOIN IN!
わ——っ
CHATTER
OH!
CAN I ?!
UM,
BY THE WAY, MY CLASSMATE CAME TO OBSERVE.
...for some reason.
HOWDY, Y'ALL.

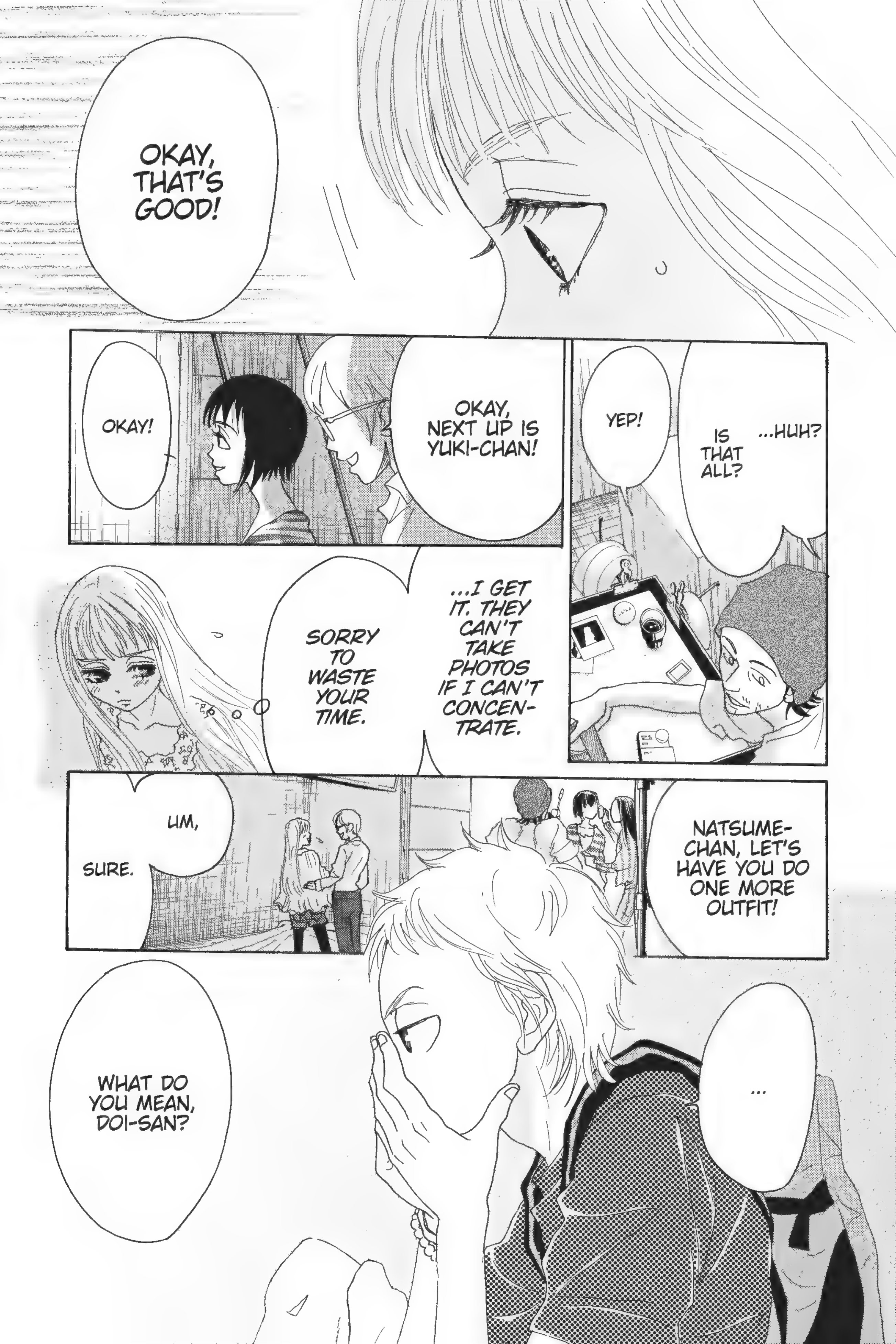

A BOYFRIEND?
AT YOUR AGE?
Kids these days...
HE'S-
HE'S NOT-
HEY, KID.
ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY?
OR, DON'T TELL ME... YOU'RE ALREADY SIGNED TO AN AGENT?
NOT INTERESTED.
YOU SHOULD MAKE YOUR BOYFRIEND JOIN IN, TOO!
HE'S SO GOOD-LOOKING!
HE'S NOT MY BOYFRIEND!
HE'S CERTAINLY GOT SEX APPEAL!
EXACTLY RIGHT.
UGH!
What are you even saying?!
DOI-SAN!
HIRONO-SAN IS WAITING IN THE CAFE.
AH!
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.
バターン
SLAM
HUH?
HIRONO?
WHO'S THAT?

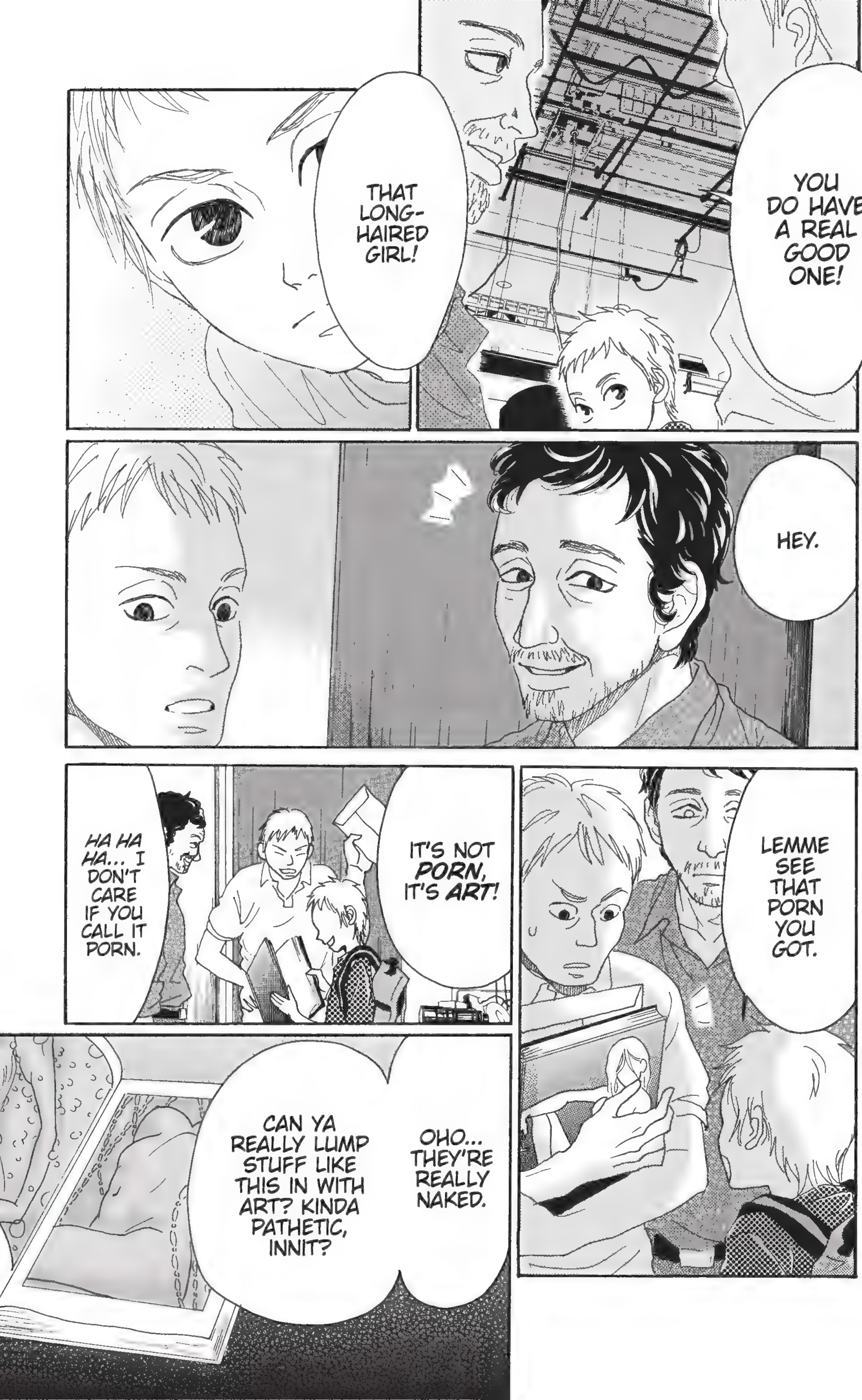

I THINK THEY MEAN SHOGO HIRONO, THE FAMOUS PHOTOGRAPHER.
OH! I'VE HEARD OF HIM!
HE'S THE ONE WHO TAKES ALL THOSE NUDES!
OH, COME ON. HE DOES MORE THAN NUDES. I'M A BIG FAN.
BUT YEAH, I DOUBT *THE* SHOGO HIRONO WOULD BE HERE.
きゃっ CHATTER
きゃっ CHATTER
きゃっ CHATTER
...
HEY!
COME ON!
...WHAT?
SHE HASN'T EVEN ***KISSED*** ME YET!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
OF COURSE WE HAVEN'T!
YOU NEVER KNOW, WITH TODAY'S YOUTH...

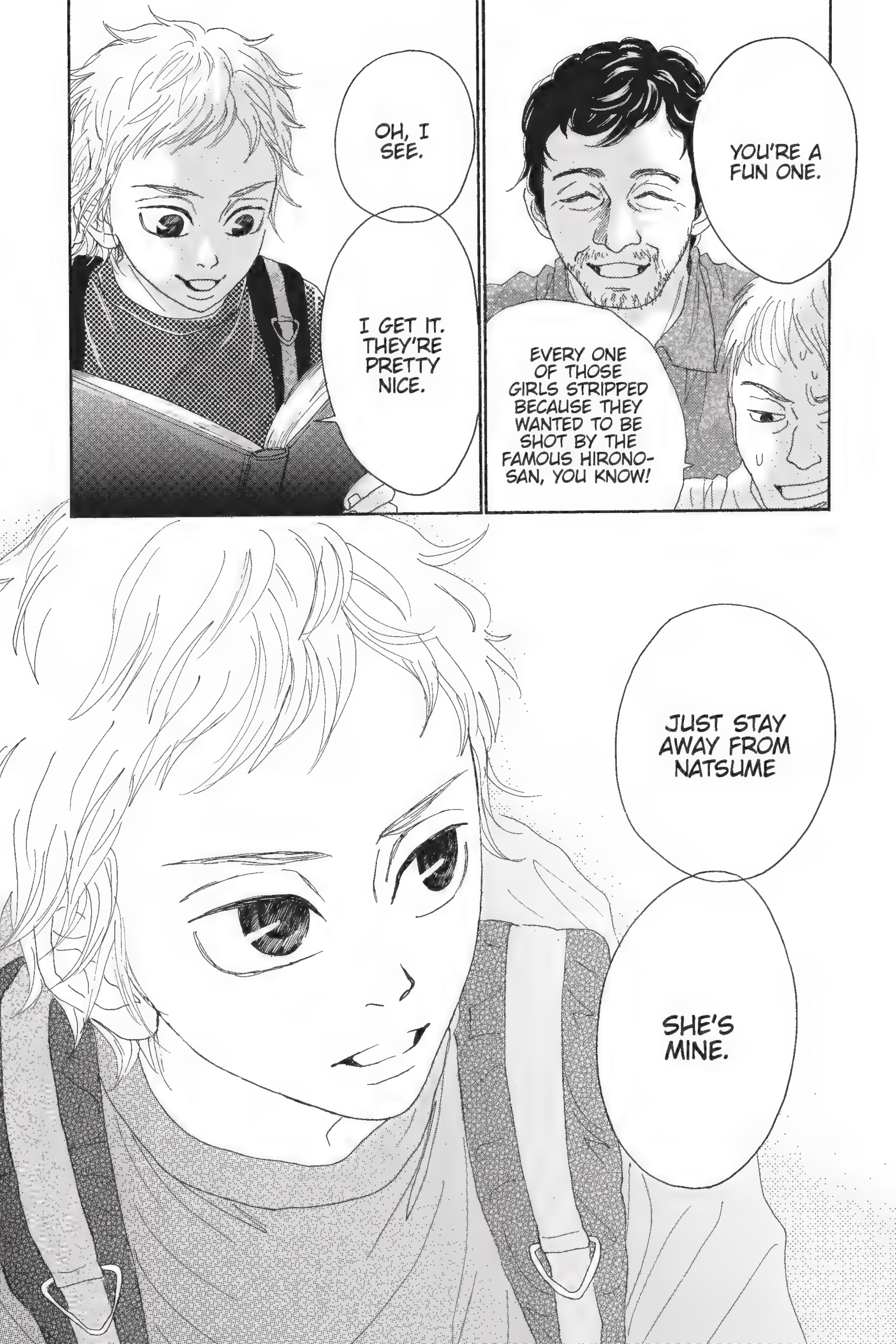

I CAN'T BELIEVE THEM!
THIS IS PERFECT! TODAY'S THEME IS "THE CLOTHING OF ROMANCE."
Try for that feeling!
ROMANCE? I DON'T GET IT.
SHOULD I JUST SMILE OR SOMETHING?
SNAP
SNAP
GIVE ME A DIFFERENT POSE, WOULD YOU?
SNAP
HE'S STARING AT ME.
EYES ON THE CAMERA, NATSUME-CHAN.
SNAP
...OH, NO.
SNAP

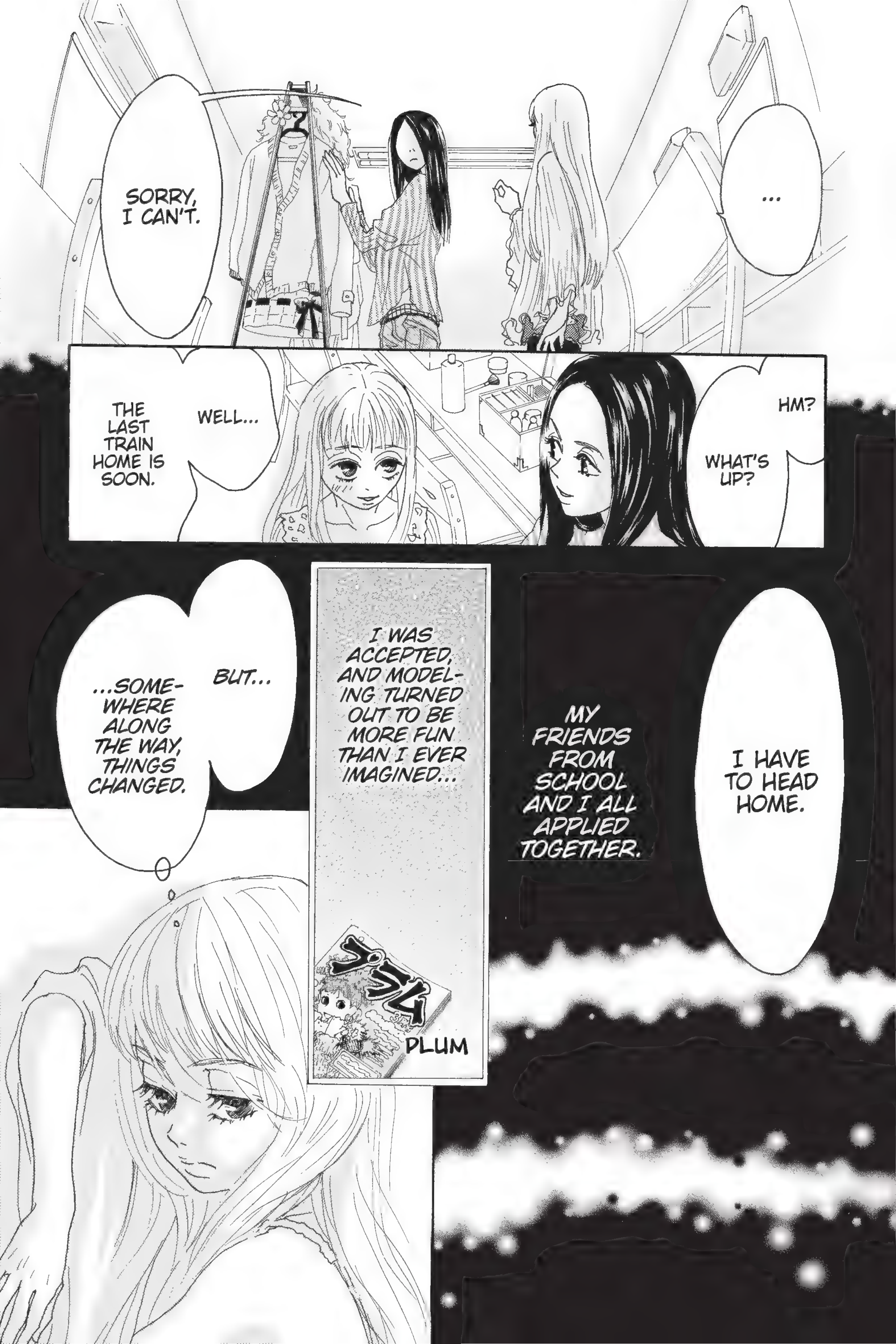

SNAP
I CAN'T CONCENTRATE.
YEAH, THAT'S NICE!
I CAN'T DO IT AT ALL!
OH, NO...
I'M...
MY MIND...

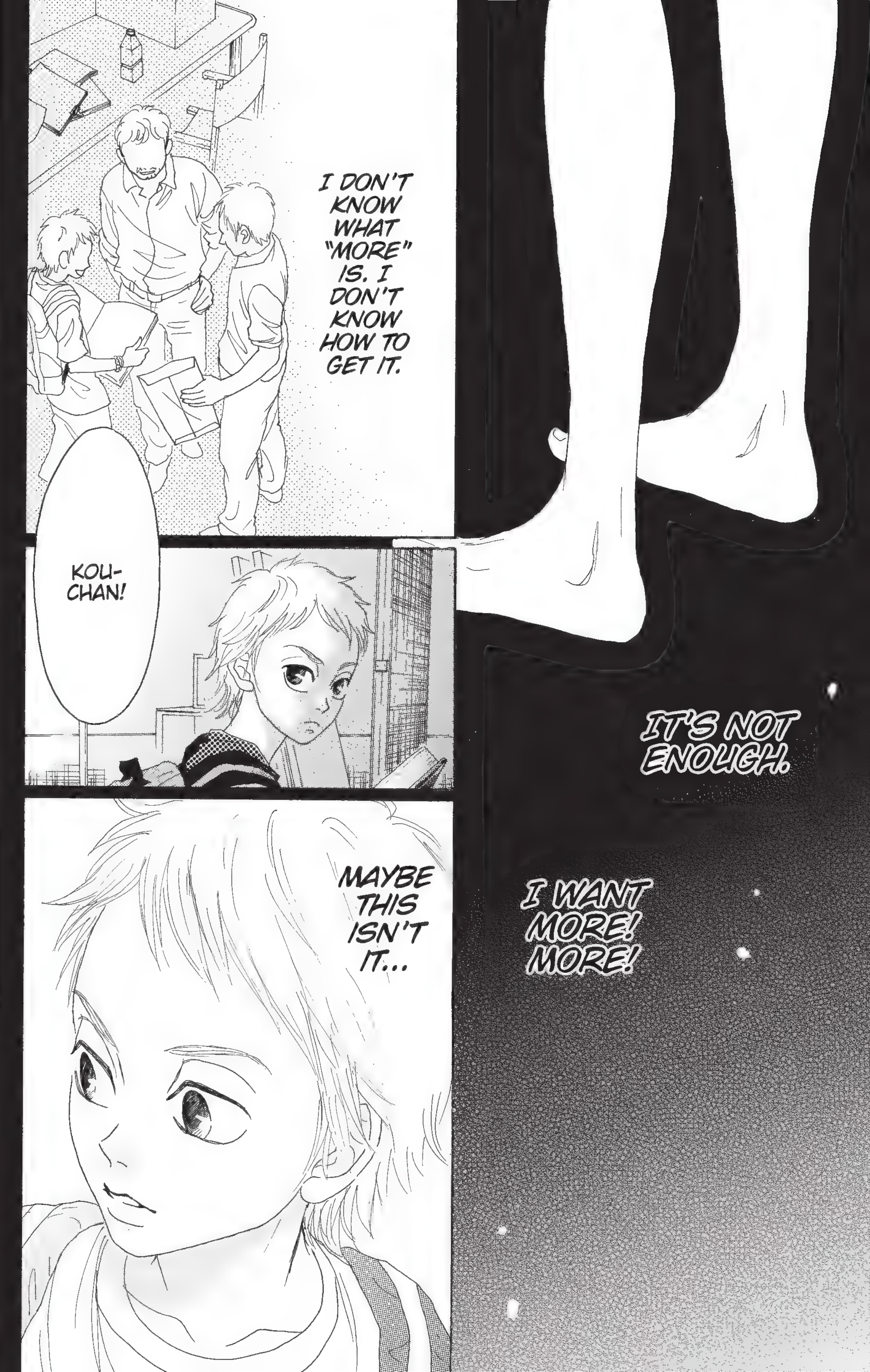

...IS SLIPPING ...
...BACK THERE...

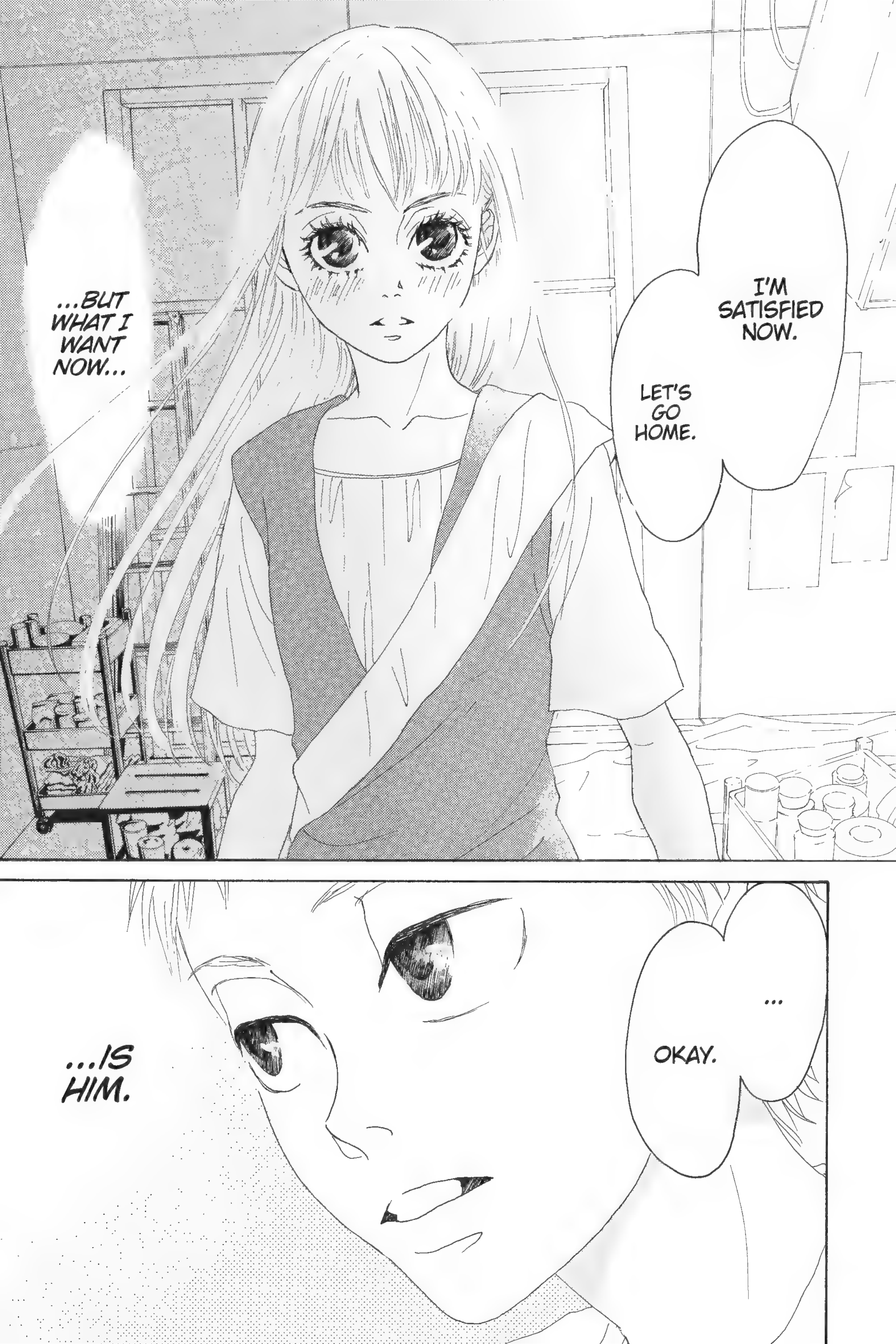

OKAY, THAT'S GOOD!
...HUH? IS THAT ALL?
YEP!
OKAY, NEXT UP IS YUKI-CHAN!
OKAY!
...I GET IT. THEY CAN'T TAKE PHOTOS IF I CAN'T CONCENTRATE.
SORRY TO WASTE YOUR TIME.
NATSUME-CHAN, LET'S HAVE YOU DO ONE MORE OUTFIT!
UM, SURE.
...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, DOI-SAN?

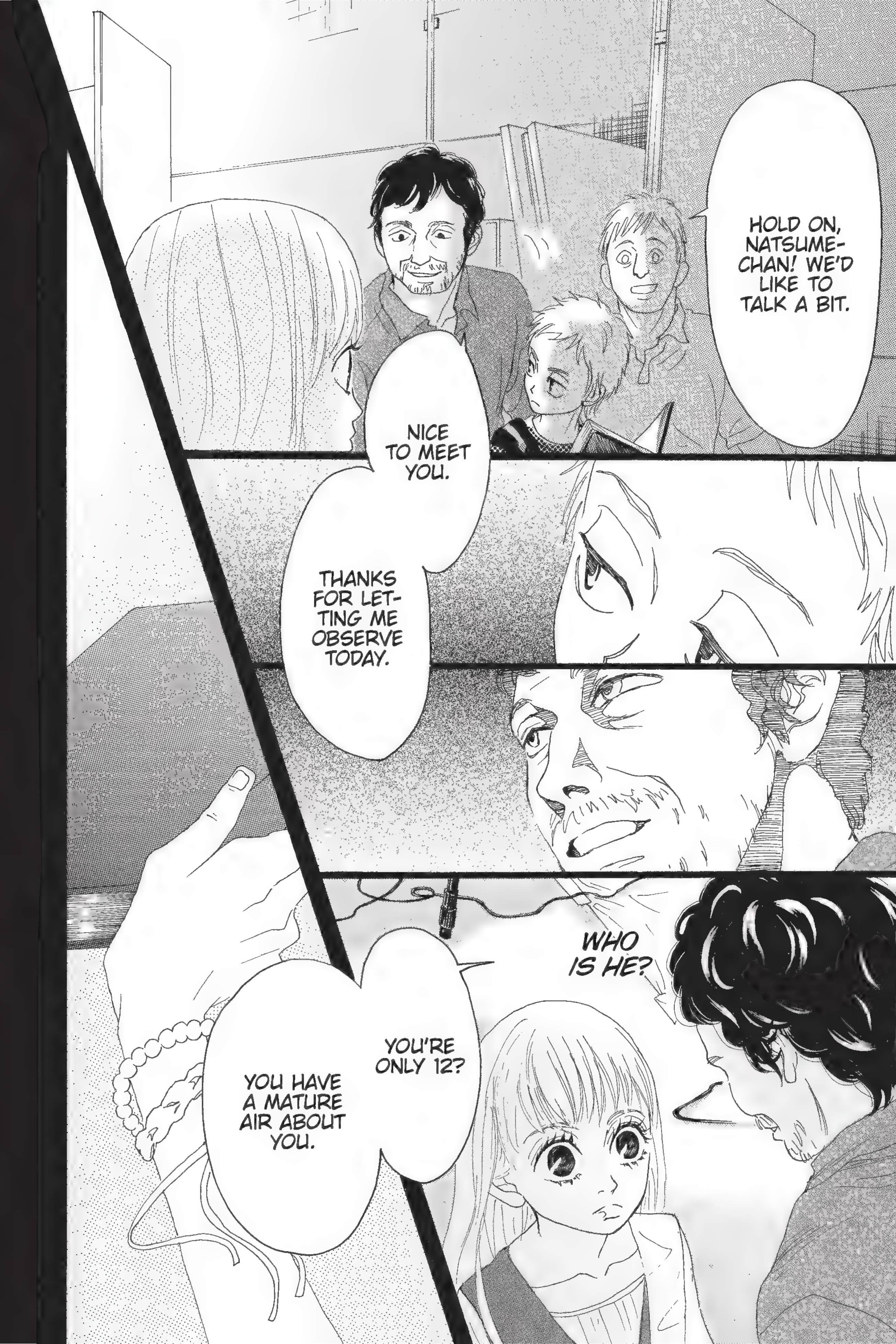

YOU DO HAVE A REAL GOOD ONE!
THAT LONG-HAIRED GIRL!
HEY.
LEMME SEE THAT PORN YOU GOT.
IT'S NOT *PORN*, IT'S *ART*!
HA HA HA... I DON'T CARE IF YOU CALL IT PORN.
OHO... THEY'RE REALLY NAKED.
CAN YA REALLY LUMP STUFF LIKE THIS IN WITH ART? KINDA PATHETIC, INNIT?

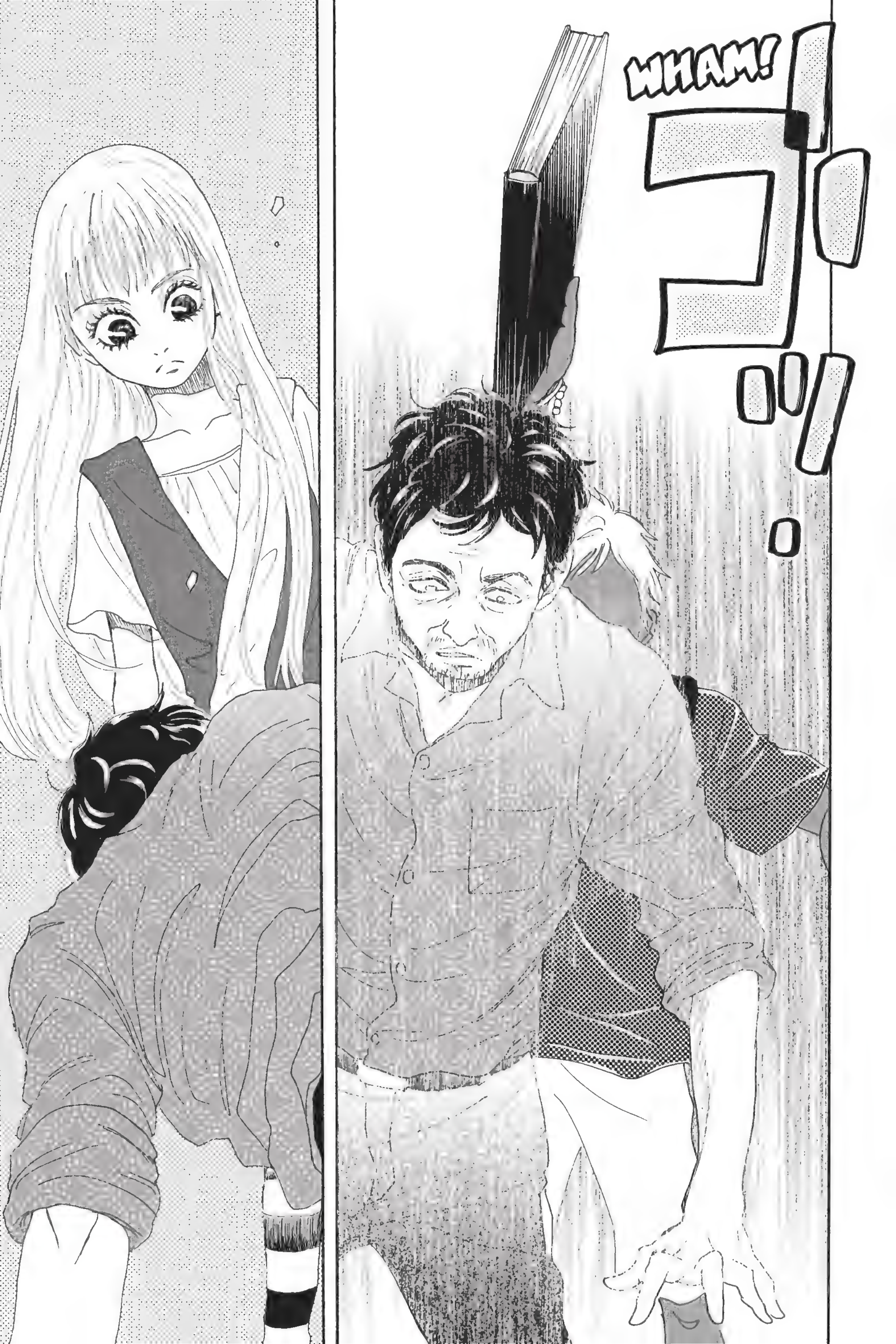

OH, I SEE.
I GET IT. THEY'RE PRETTY NICE.
YOU'RE A FUN ONE.
EVERY ONE OF THOSE GIRLS STRIPPED BECAUSE THEY WANTED TO BE SHOT BY THE FAMOUS HIRONO-SAN, YOU KNOW!
JUST STAY AWAY FROM NATSUME
SHE'S MINE.

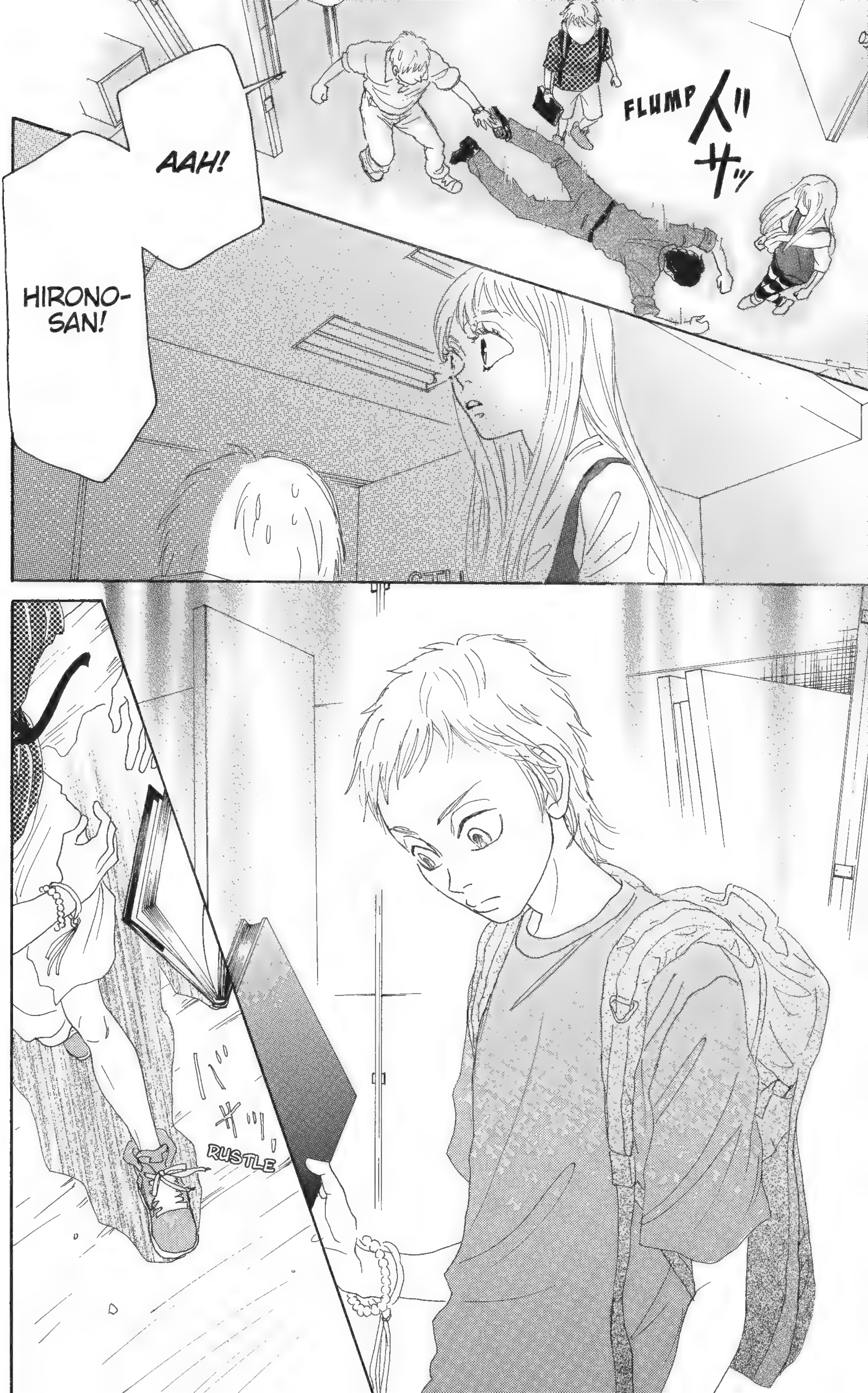

...
SORRY, I CAN'T.
HM? WHAT'S UP?
WELL... THE LAST TRAIN HOME IS SOON.
I HAVE TO HEAD HOME.
MY FRIENDS FROM SCHOOL AND I ALL APPLIED TOGETHER.
I WAS ACCEPTED, AND MODELING TURNED OUT TO BE MORE FUN THAN I EVER IMAGINED...
PLUM
BUT...
...SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY, THINGS CHANGED.

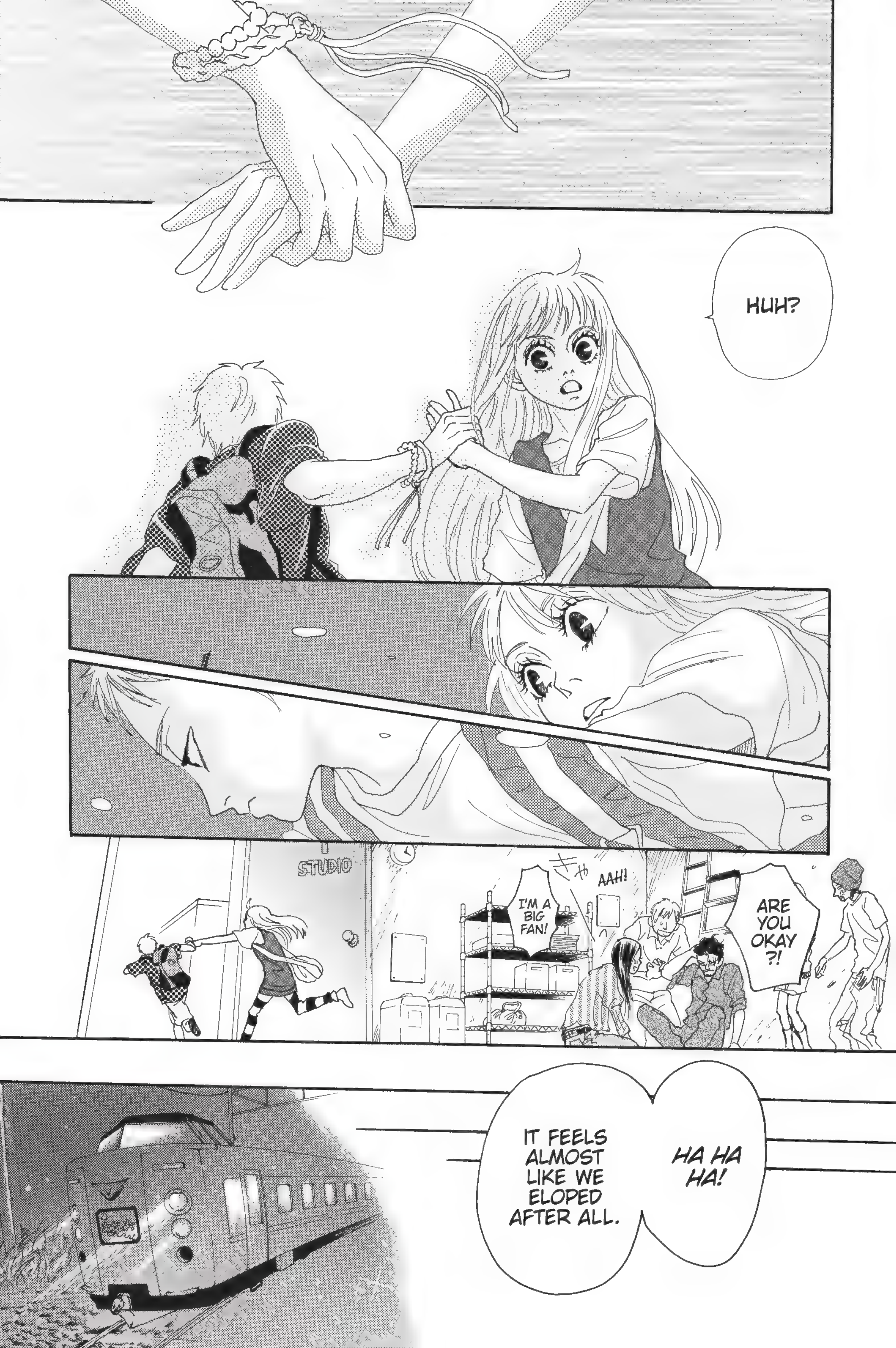

IT'S NOT ENOUGH.
I WANT MORE! MORE!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT "MORE" IS. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET IT.
KOU-CHAN!
MAYBE THIS ISN'T IT...

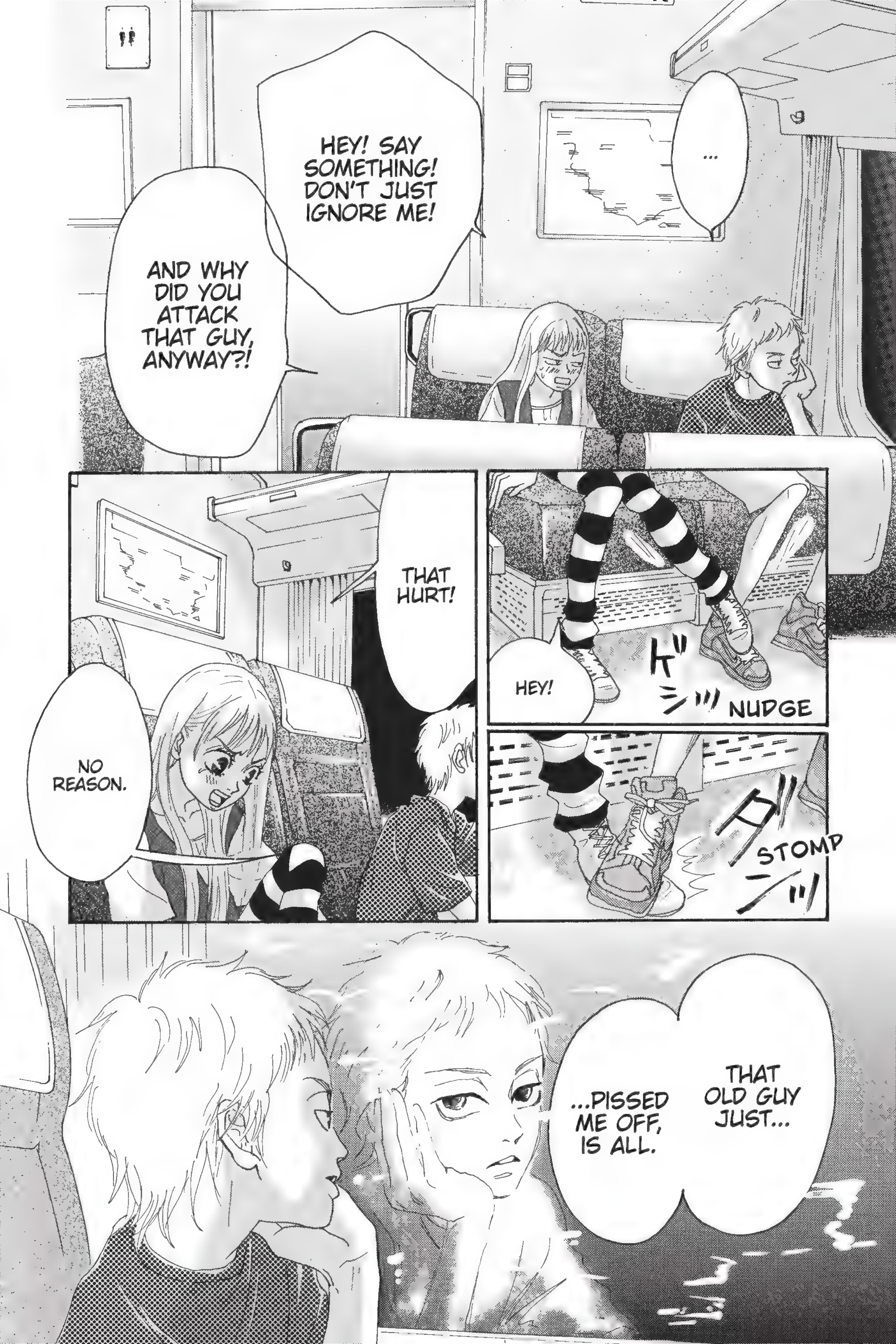

I'M SATISFIED NOW.
LET'S GO HOME.
...BUT WHAT I WANT NOW...
... OKAY.
...IS HIM.

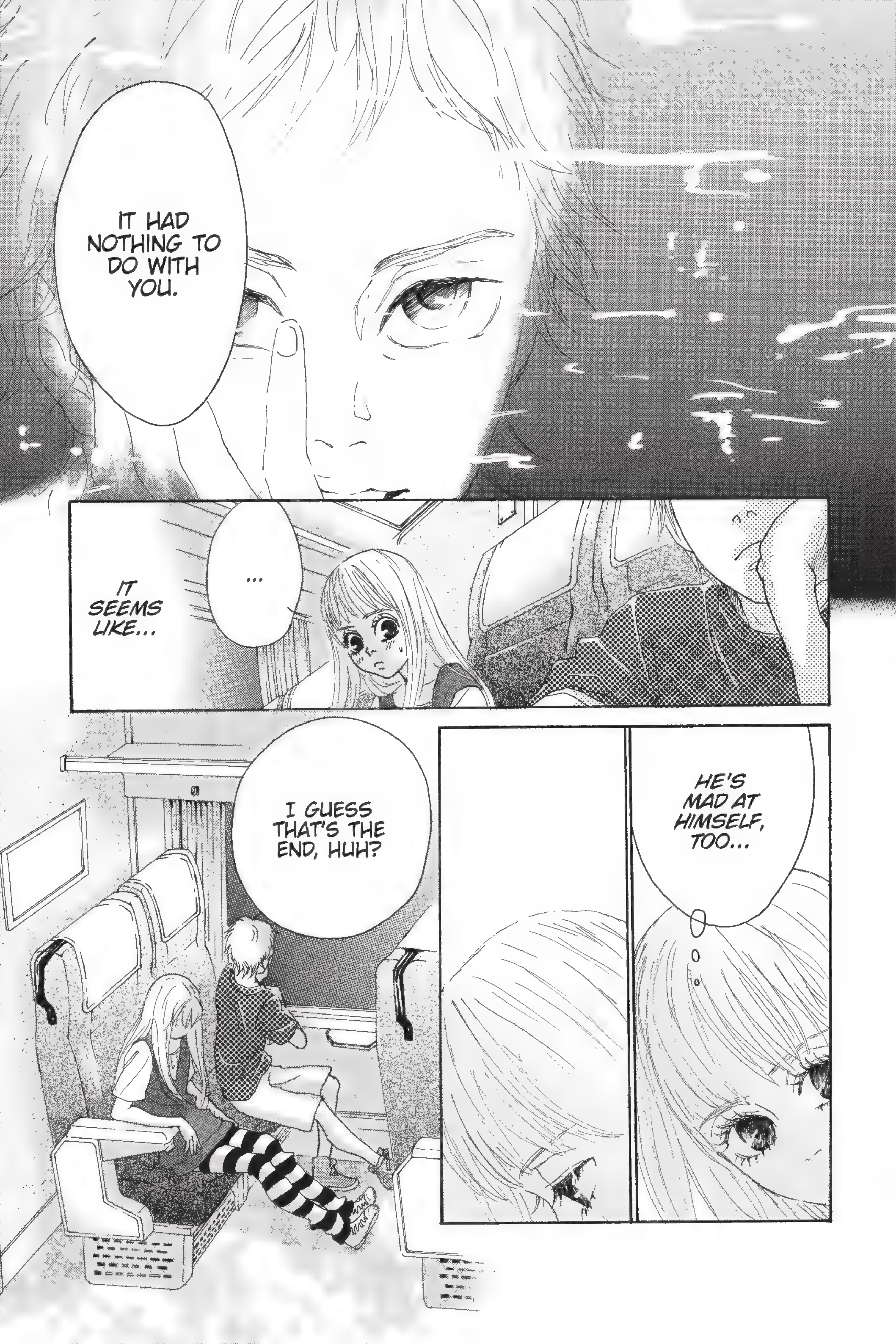

HOLD ON, NATSUME-CHAN! WE'D LIKE TO TALK A BIT.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
THANKS FOR LETTING ME OBSERVE TODAY.
WHO IS HE?
YOU'RE ONLY 12?
YOU HAVE A MATURE AIR ABOUT YOU.

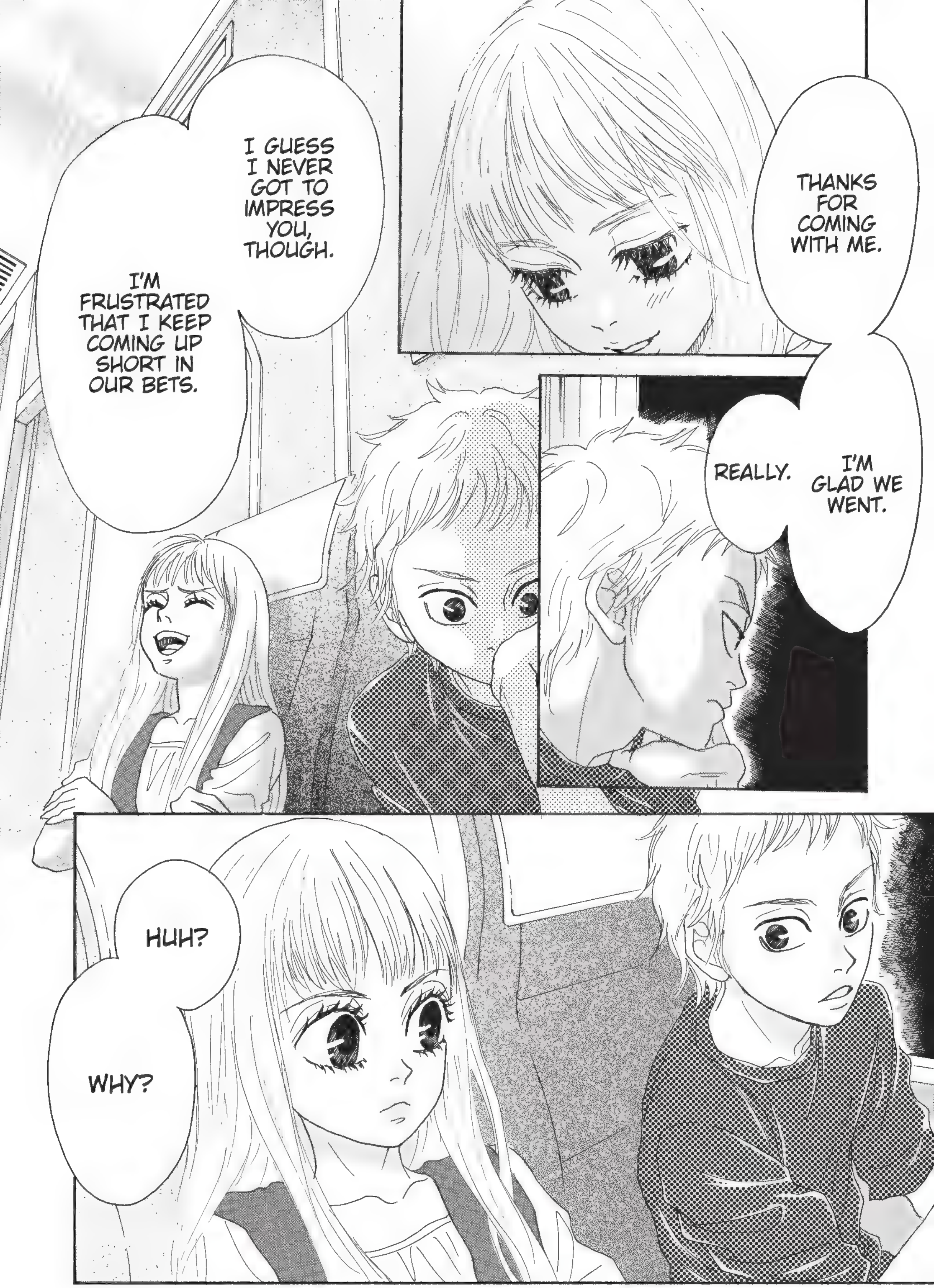

WHAM!
ゴッ

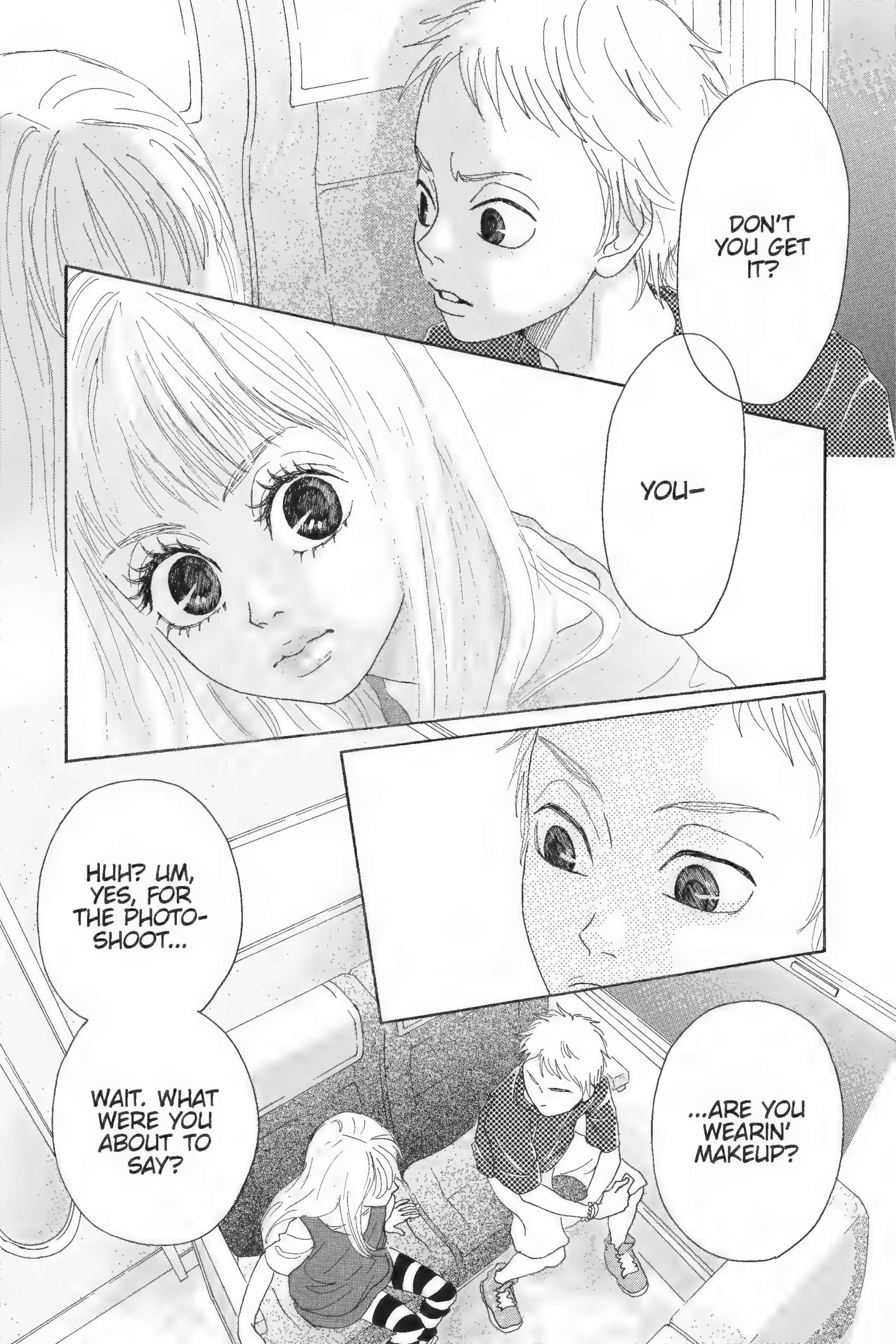

FLUMP ズザッ
AAH!
HIRONO-SAN!
バサッ
RUSTLE

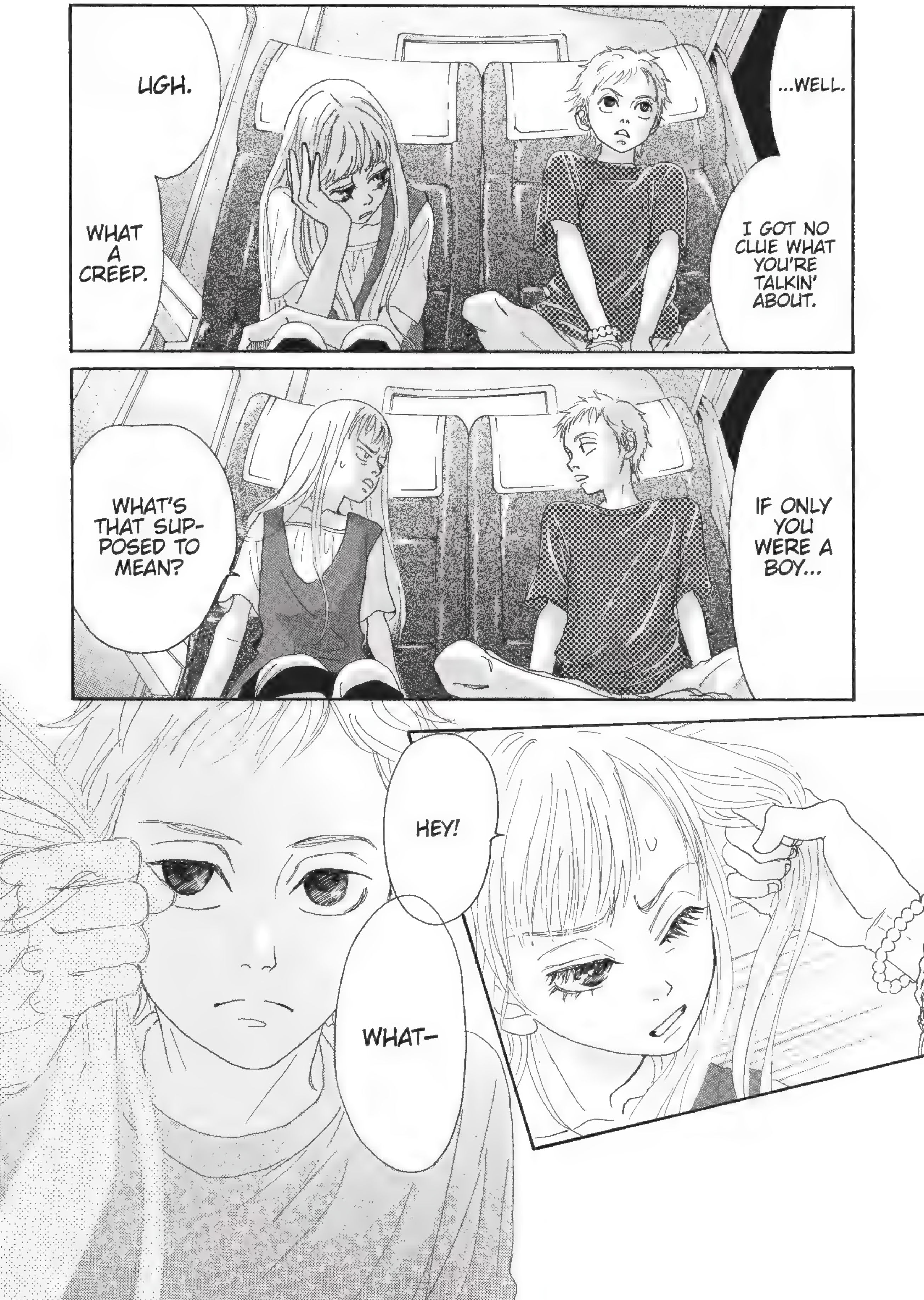

HUH?
STUDIO
ARE YOU OKAY?!
AAH!
きゃ
I'M A BIG FAN!
IT FEELS ALMOST LIKE WE ELOPED AFTER ALL.
HA HA HA!

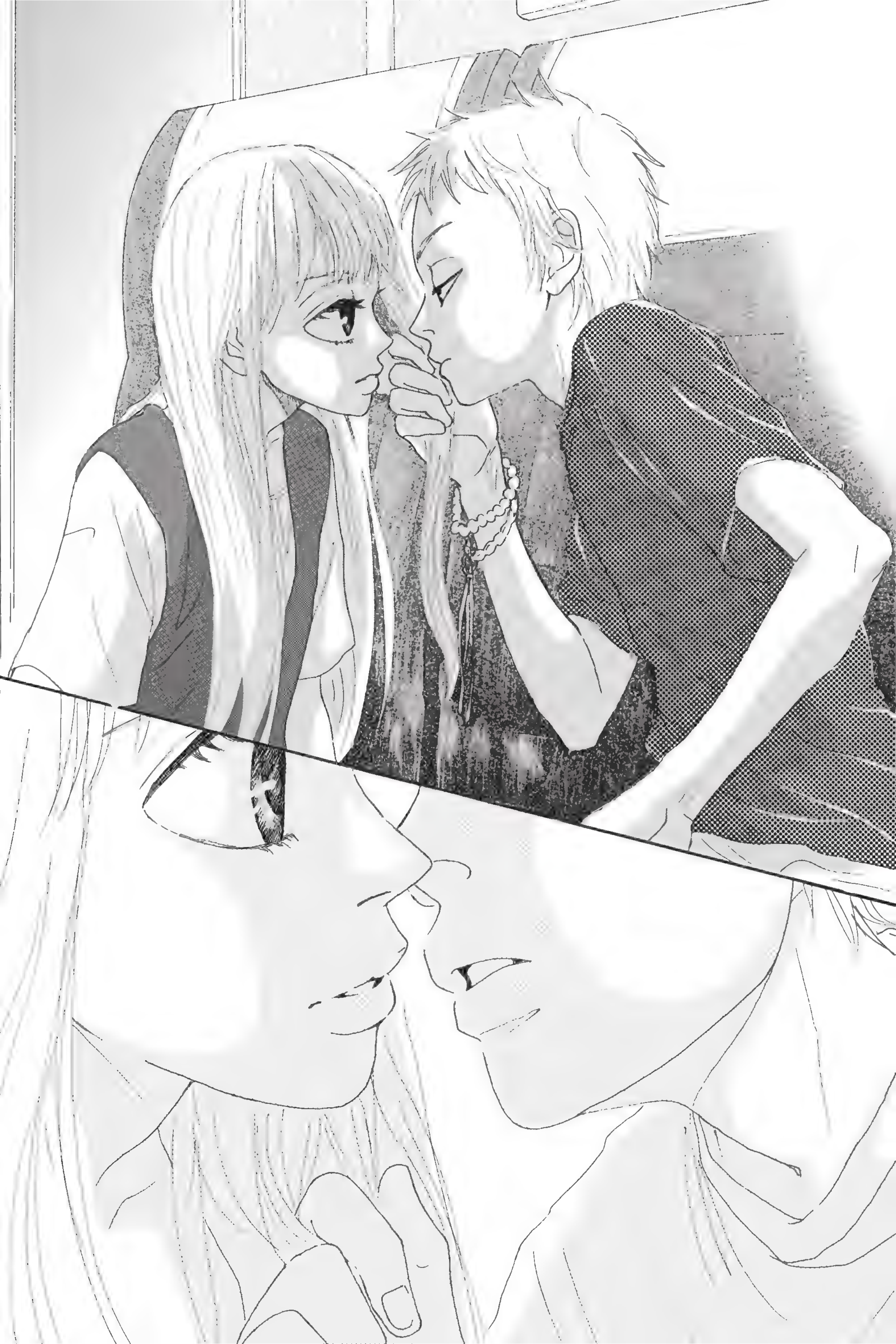

...
HEY! SAY SOMETHING! DON'T JUST IGNORE ME!
AND WHY DID YOU ATTACK THAT GUY, ANYWAY?!
HEY!
ドシッ
NUDGE
ダシッ
STOMP
THAT HURT!
NO REASON.
THAT OLD GUY JUST...
...PISSED ME OFF, IS ALL.

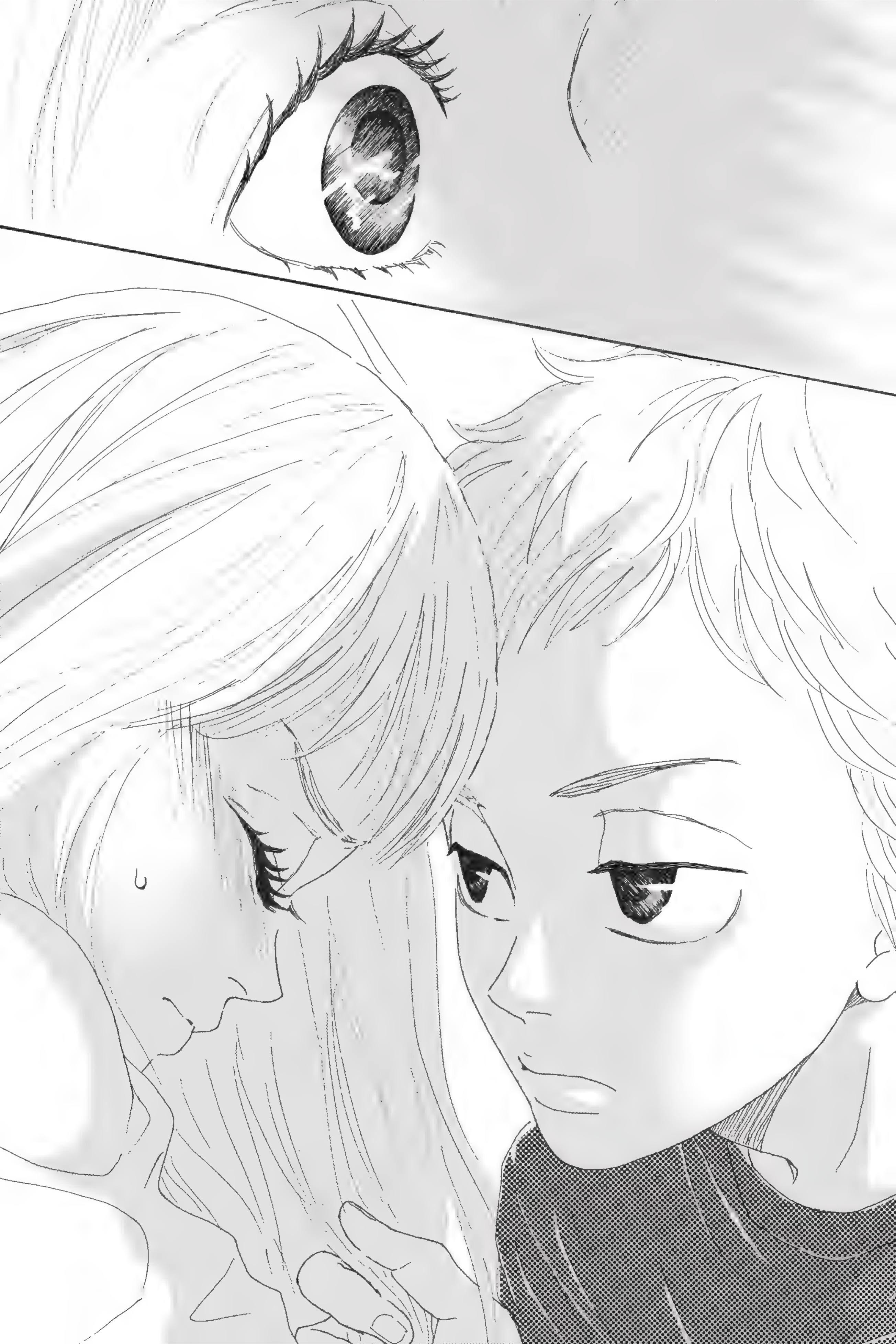

IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU.
...
IT SEEMS LIKE...
HE'S MAD AT HIMSELF, TOO...
I GUESS THAT'S THE END, HUH?

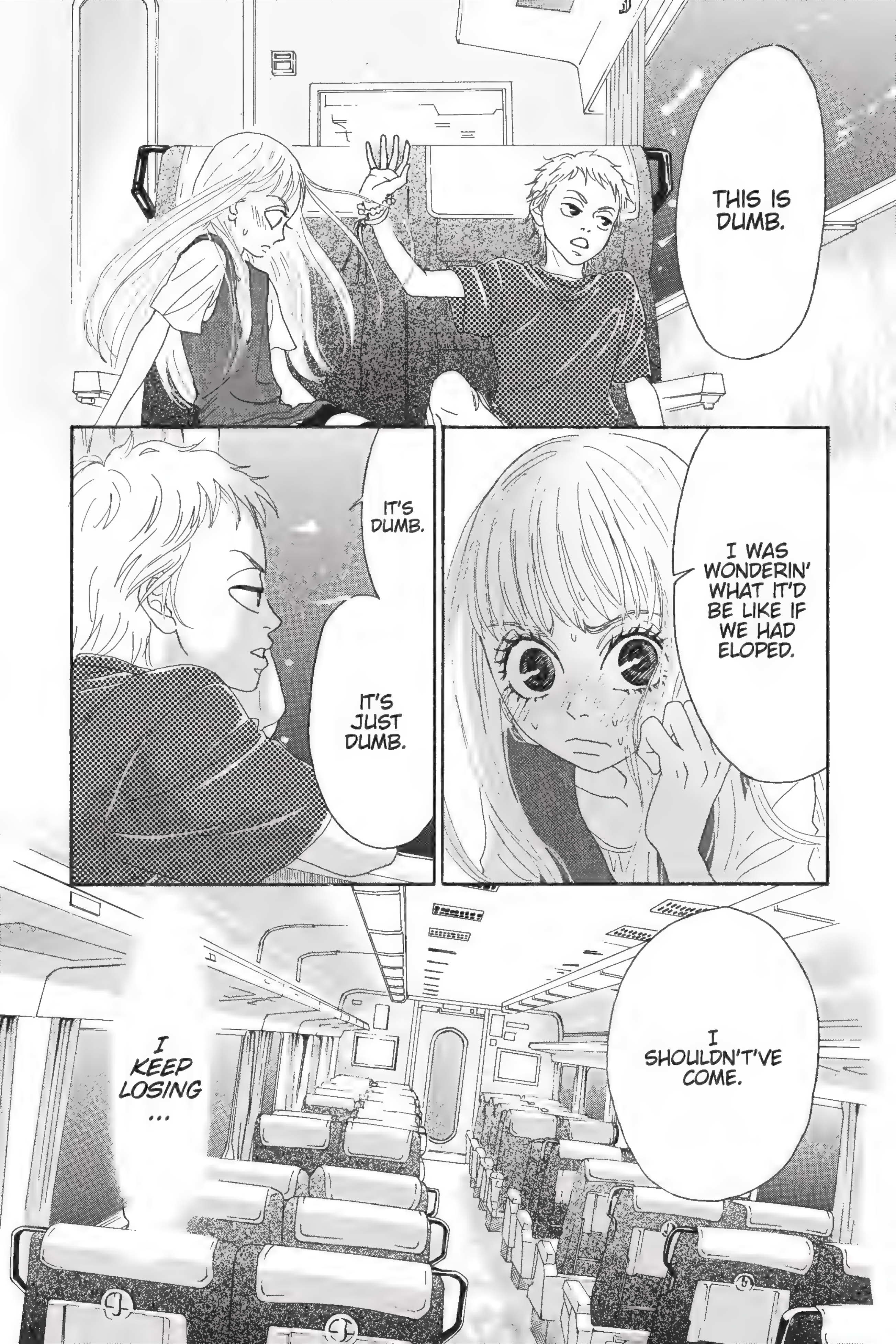

THANKS FOR COMING WITH ME.
I'M GLAD WE WENT.
REALLY.
I GUESS I NEVER GOT TO IMPRESS YOU, THOUGH.
I'M FRUSTRATED THAT I KEEP COMING UP SHORT IN OUR BETS.
HUH?
WHY?

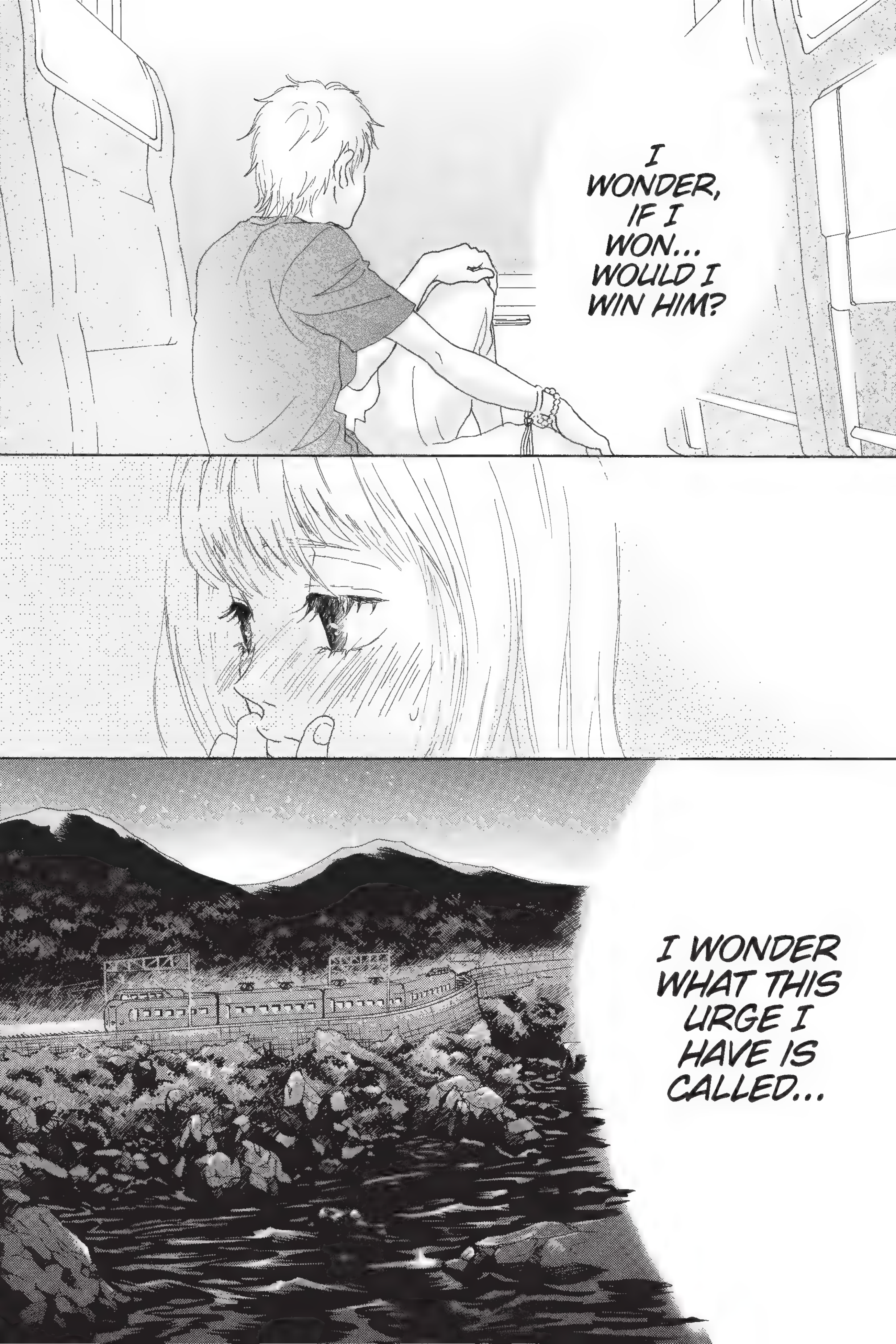

DON'T YOU GET IT?
YOU–
HUH? UM, YES, FOR THE PHOTO-SHOOT...
WAIT. WHAT WERE YOU ABOUT TO SAY?
...ARE YOU WEARIN' MAKEUP?


...WELL.
I GOT NO CLUE WHAT YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT.
UGH.
WHAT A CREEP.
IF ONLY YOU WERE A BOY...
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
HEY!
WHAT-



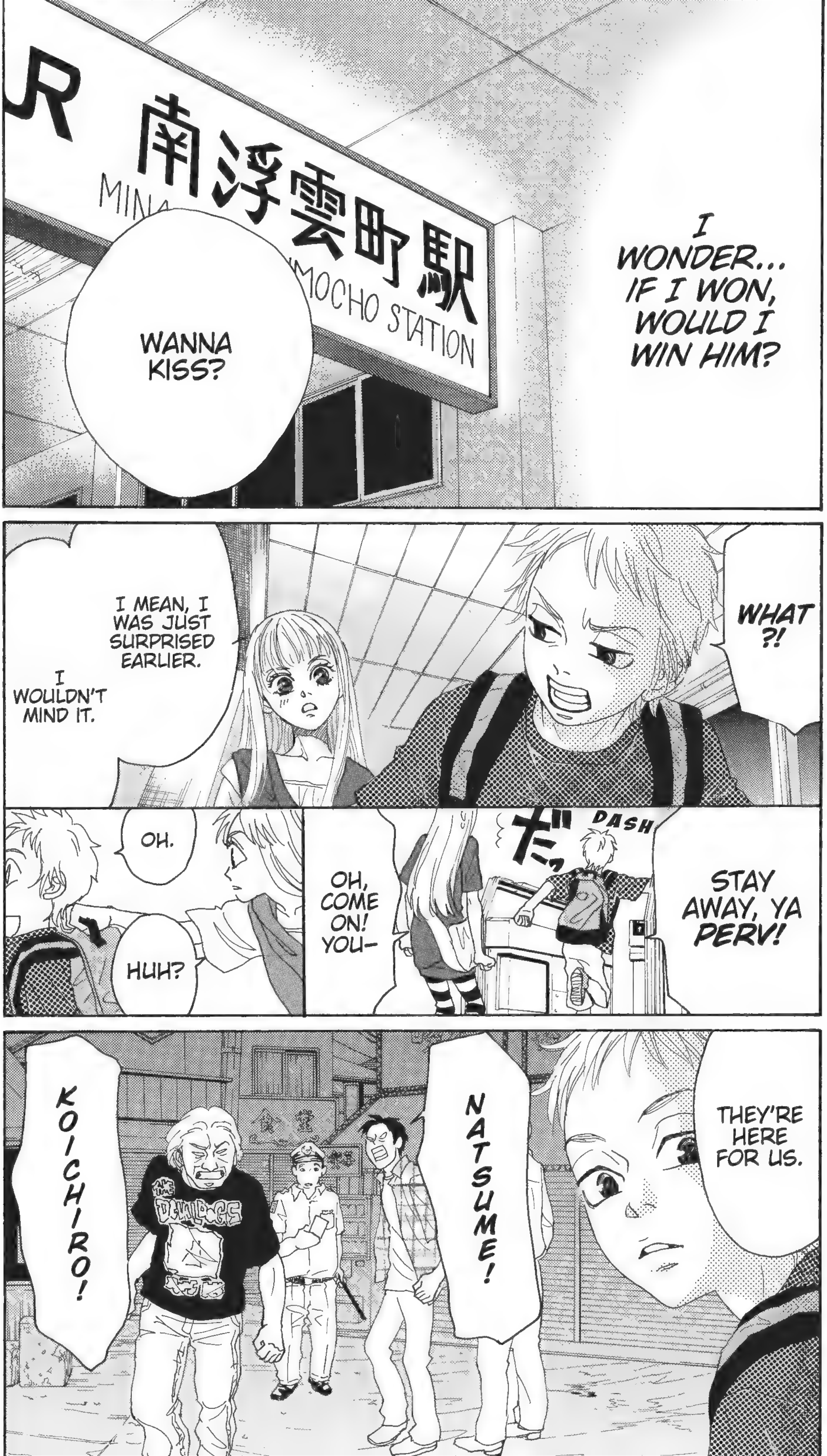


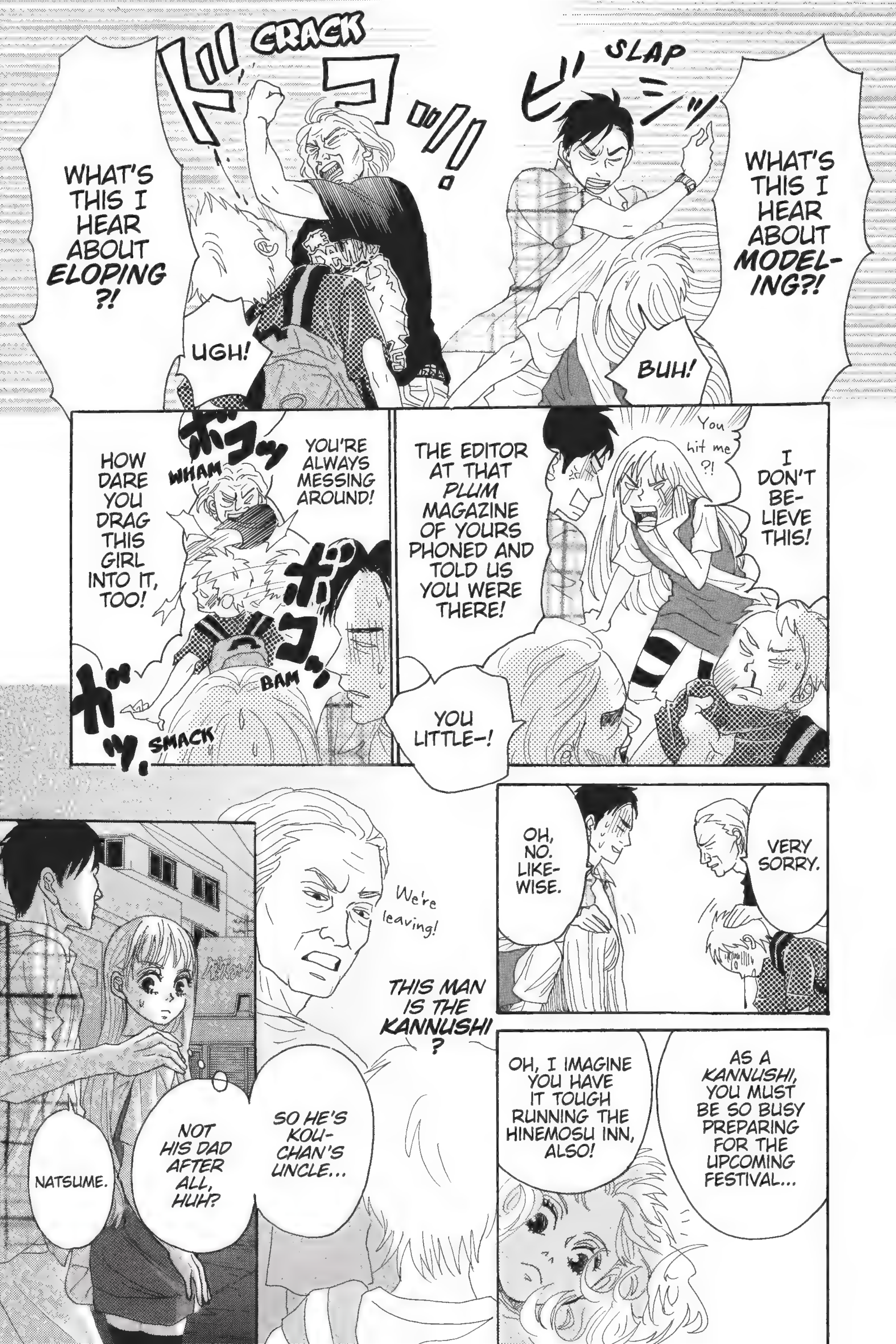

THIS IS DUMB.
I WAS WONDERIN' WHAT IT'D BE LIKE IF WE HAD ELOPED.
IT'S DUMB.
IT'S JUST DUMB.
I SHOULDN'T'VE COME.
I KEEP LOSING ...

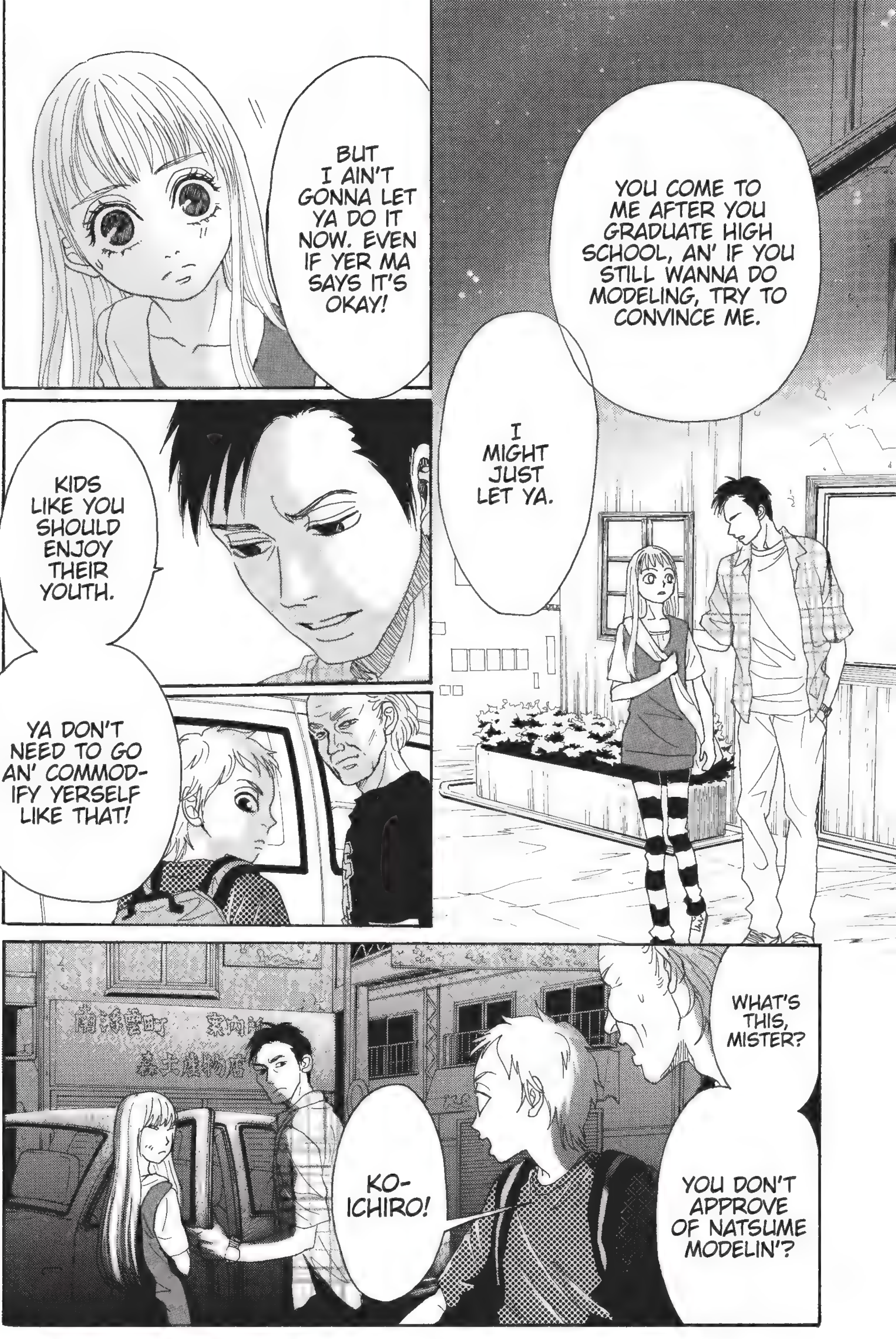

I WONDER, IF I WON... WOULD I WIN HIM?
I WONDER WHAT THIS URGE I HAVE IS CALLED...

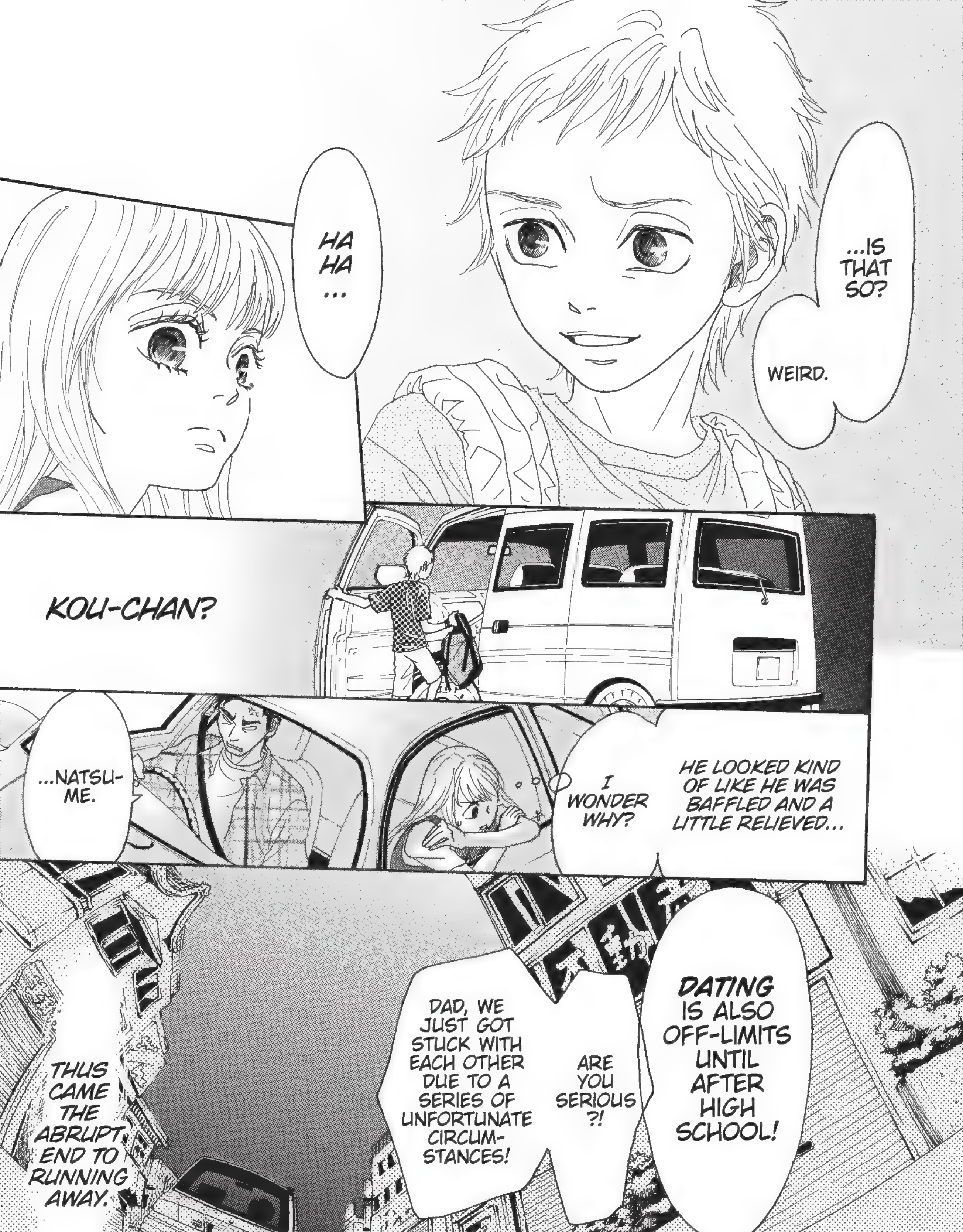
4

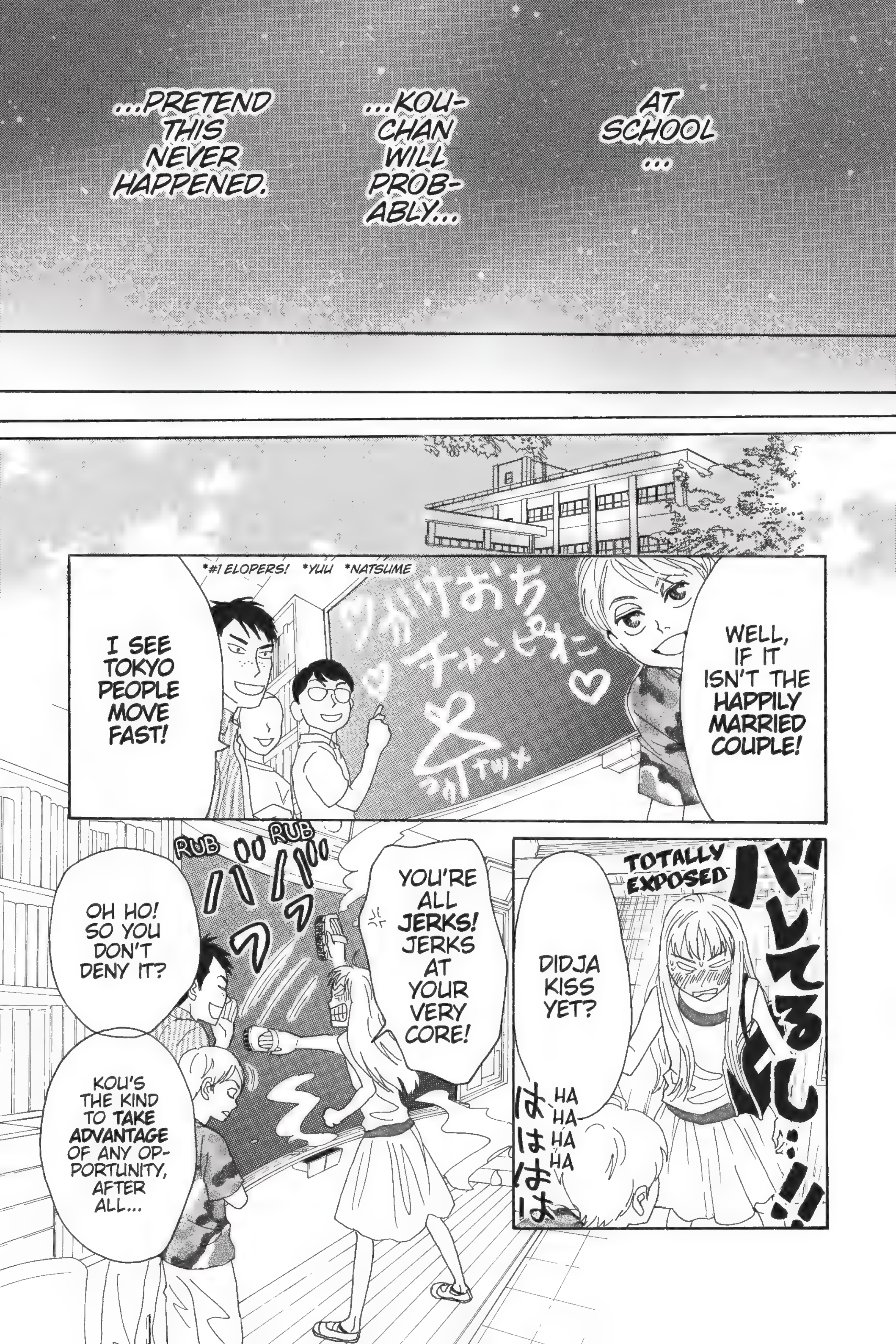
Impatience

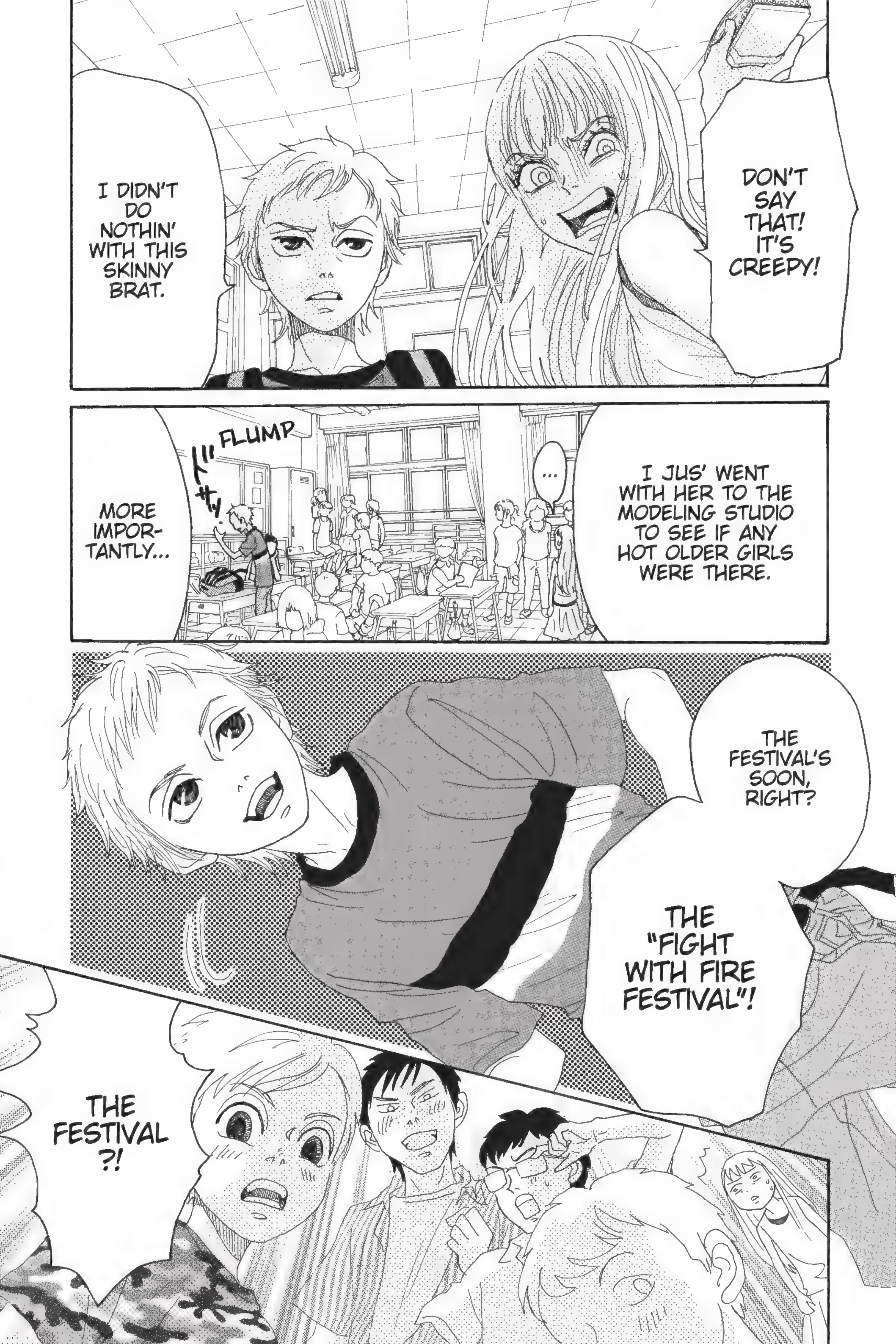

R 南浮雲町駅
MINA
MOCHO STATION
I WONDER... IF I WON, WOULD I WIN HIM?
WANNA KISS?
WHAT?!
I MEAN, I WAS JUST SURPRISED EARLIER.
I WOULDN'T MIND IT.
STAY AWAY, YA PERV!
DASH
だっ
OH, COME ON! YOU-
OH.
HUH?
THEY'RE HERE FOR US.
NATSUME!
KOICHIRO!
食堂

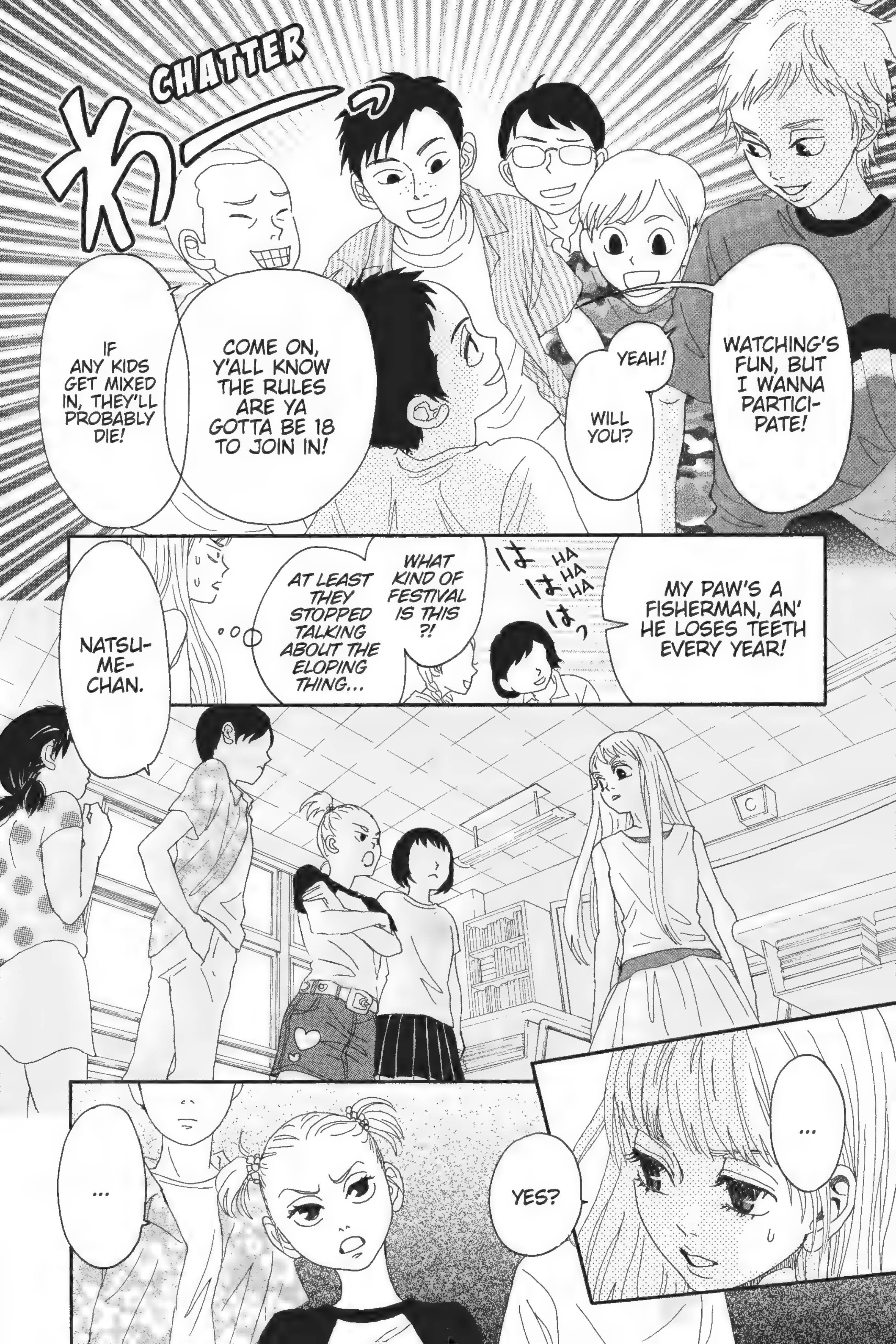

SLAP
WHAT'S THIS I HEAR ABOUT MODELING?!
BUH!
CRACK
WHAT'S THIS I HEAR ABOUT ELOPING?!
UGH!
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!
You hit me?!
THE EDITOR AT THAT PLUM MAGAZINE OF YOURS PHONED AND TOLD US YOU WERE THERE!
YOU LITTLE-!
YOU'RE ALWAYS MESSING AROUND!
WHAM
HOW DARE YOU DRAG THIS GIRL INTO IT, TOO!
BAM
SMACK
VERY SORRY.
OH, NO. LIKEWISE.
AS A KANNUSHI, YOU MUST BE SO BUSY PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING FESTIVAL...
OH, I IMAGINE YOU HAVE IT TOUGH RUNNING THE HINEMOSU INN, ALSO!
We're leaving!
THIS MAN IS THE KANNUSHI?
SO HE'S KOU-CHAN'S UNCLE...
NOT HIS DAD AFTER ALL, HUH?
NATSUME.

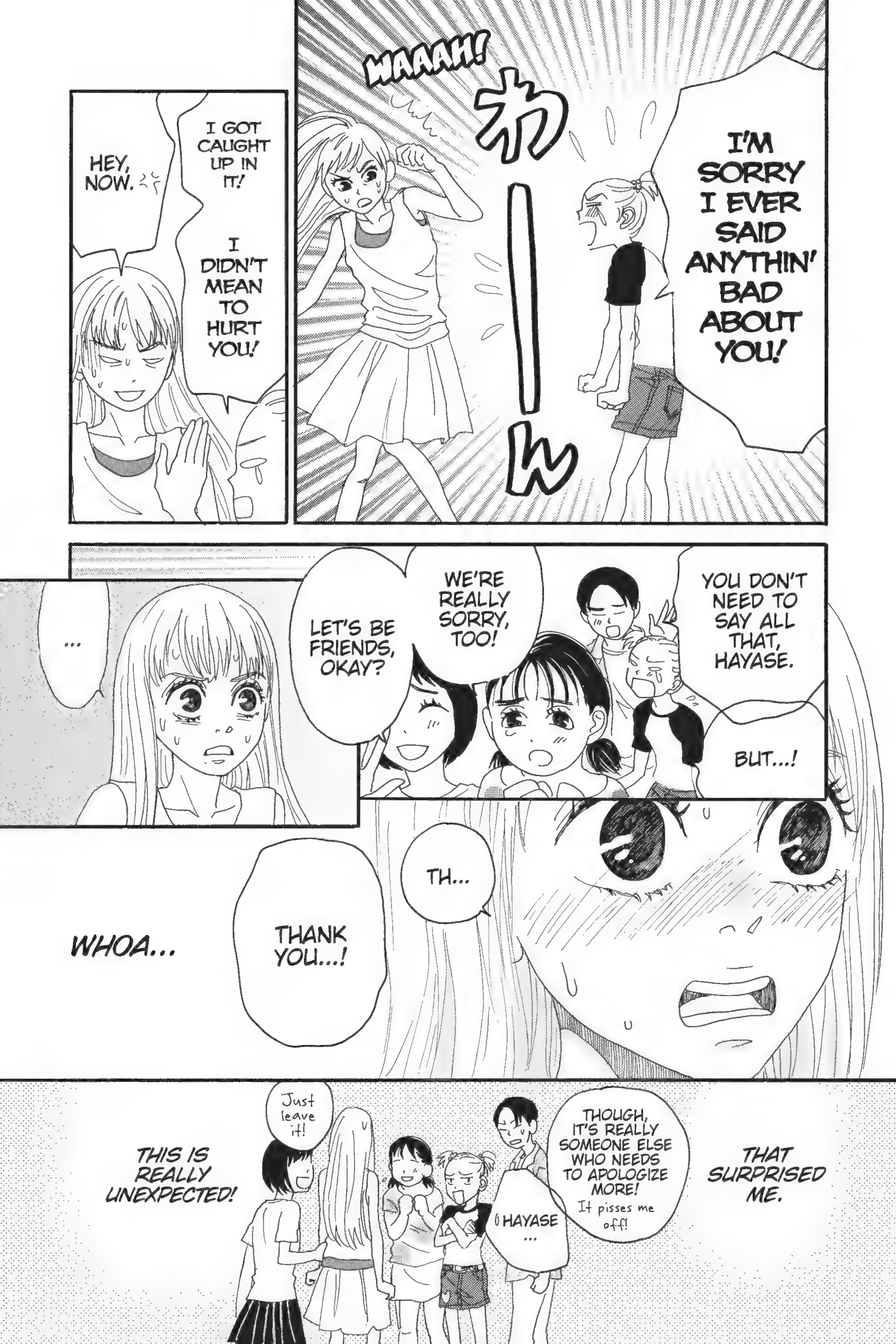

YOU COME TO ME AFTER YOU GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL, AN' IF YOU STILL WANNA DO MODELING, TRY TO CONVINCE ME.
I MIGHT JUST LET YA.
BUT I AIN'T GONNA LET YA DO IT NOW. EVEN IF YER MA SAYS IT'S OKAY!
KIDS LIKE YOU SHOULD ENJOY THEIR YOUTH.
YA DON'T NEED TO GO AN' COMMODIFY YERSELF LIKE THAT!
WHAT'S THIS, MISTER?
YOU DON'T APPROVE OF NATSUME MODELIN'?
KO-ICHIRO!

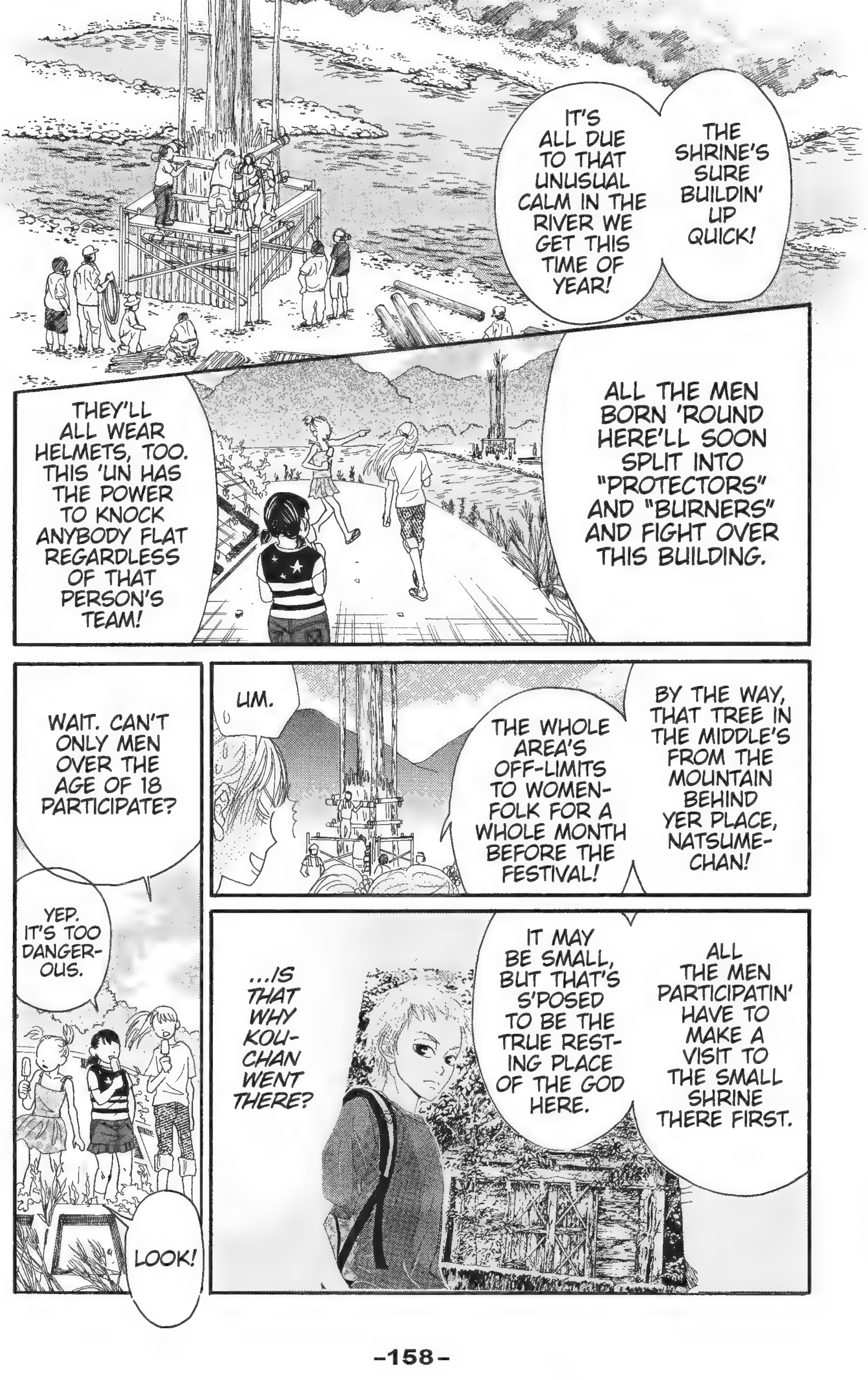

...IS THAT SO?
WEIRD.
HA HA ...
KOU-CHAN?
HE LOOKED KIND OF LIKE HE WAS BAFFLED AND A LITTLE RELIEVED...
I WONDER WHY?
...NATSUME.
DATING IS ALSO OFF-LIMITS UNTIL AFTER HIGH SCHOOL!
ARE YOU SERIOUS?!
DAD, WE JUST GOT STUCK WITH EACH OTHER DUE TO A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES!
THUS CAME THE ABRUPT END TO RUNNING AWAY.

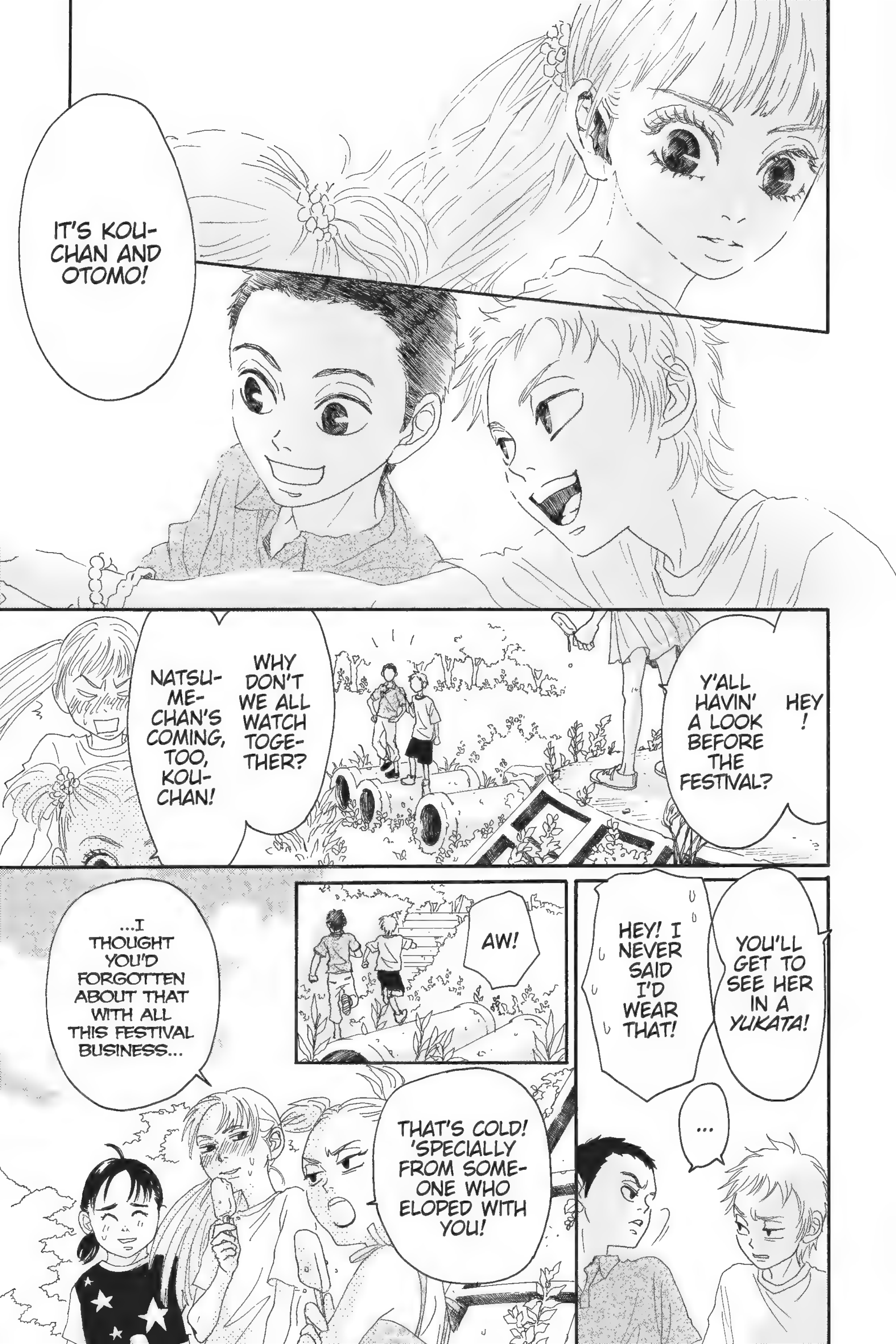

AT SCHOOL...
...KOU-CHAN WILL PROBABLY...
...PRETEND THIS NEVER HAPPENED.
WELL, IF IT ISN'T THE HAPPILY MARRIED COUPLE!
かけおちチャンピオン
ナツメ
ユウ
*#1 ELOPERS! *YUU *NATSUME
I SEE TOKYO PEOPLE MOVE FAST!
TOTALLY EXPOSED
バレてるし…!!
DIDJA KISS YET?
HA HA HA HA
はははは
YOU'RE ALL JERKS! JERKS AT YOUR VERY CORE!
RUB RUB
OH HO! SO YOU DON'T DENY IT?
KOU'S THE KIND TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY OPPORTUNITY, AFTER ALL...

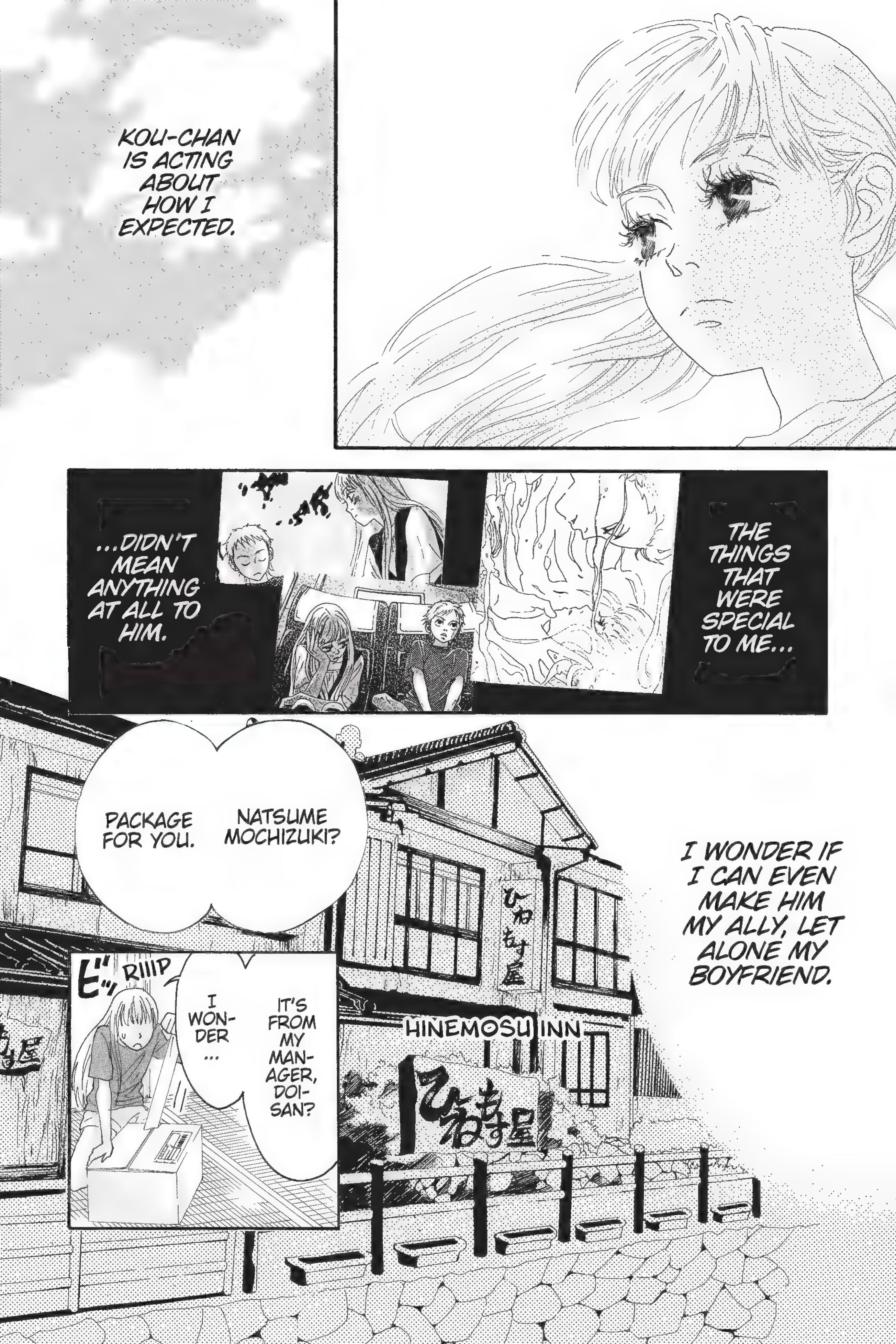

DON'T SAY THAT! IT'S CREEPY!
I DIDN'T DO NOTHIN' WITH THIS SKINNY BRAT.
I JUS' WENT WITH HER TO THE MODELING STUDIO TO SEE IF ANY HOT OLDER GIRLS WERE THERE.
...
ドサッ FLUMP
MORE IMPORTANTLY...
THE FESTIVAL'S SOON, RIGHT?
THE "FIGHT WITH FIRE FESTIVAL"!
THE FESTIVAL ?!

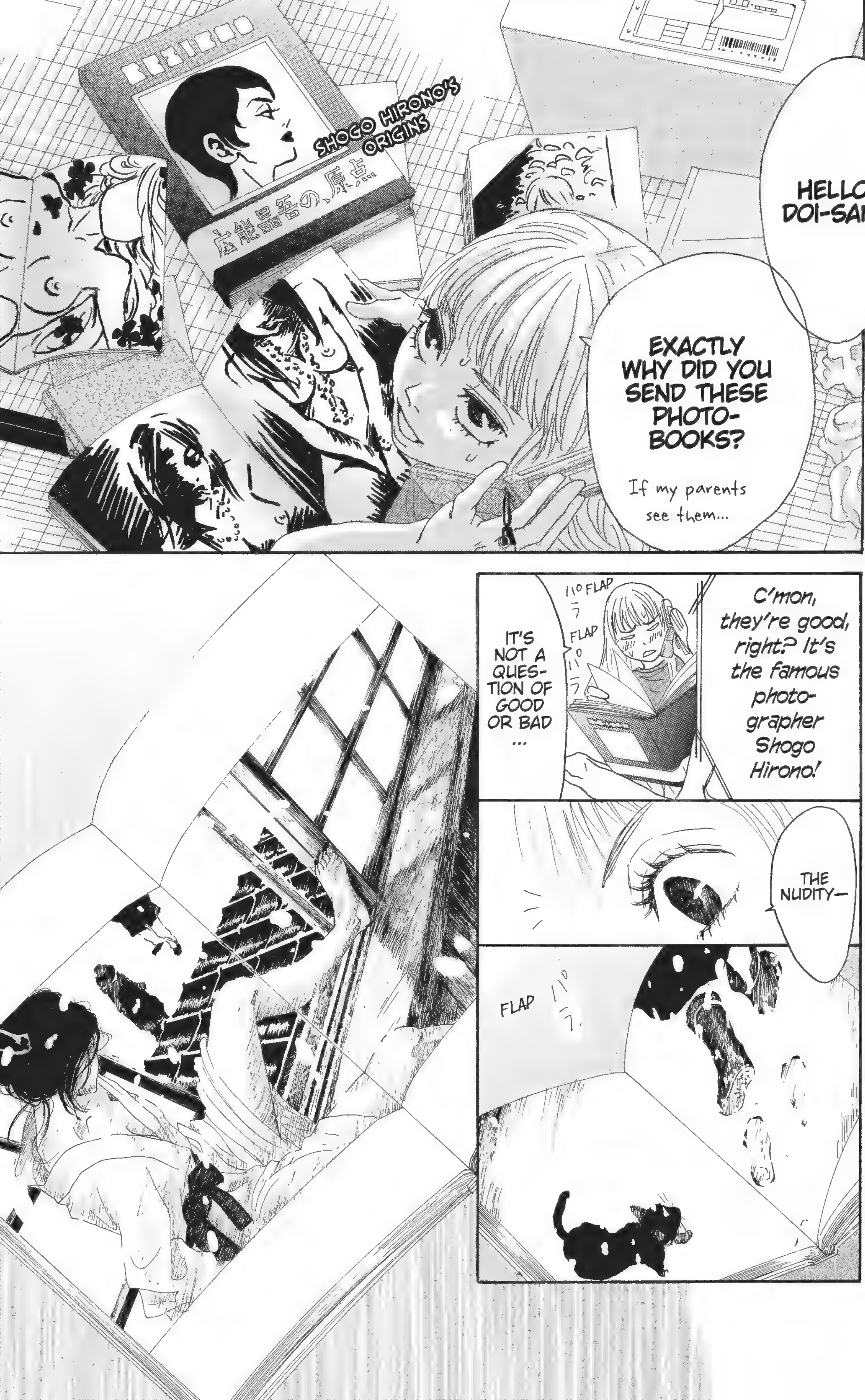

わーっ
CHATTER
WATCHING'S FUN, BUT I WANNA PARTICIPATE!
YEAH!
WILL YOU?
COME ON, Y'ALL KNOW THE RULES ARE YA GOTTA BE 18 TO JOIN IN!
IF ANY KIDS GET MIXED IN, THEY'LL PROBABLY DIE!
MY PAW'S A FISHERMAN, AN' HE LOSES TEETH EVERY YEAR!
ははは
HA HA HA
WHAT KIND OF FESTIVAL IS THIS?!
AT LEAST THEY STOPPED TALKING ABOUT THE ELOPING THING...
NATSUME-CHAN.
...
YES?
...

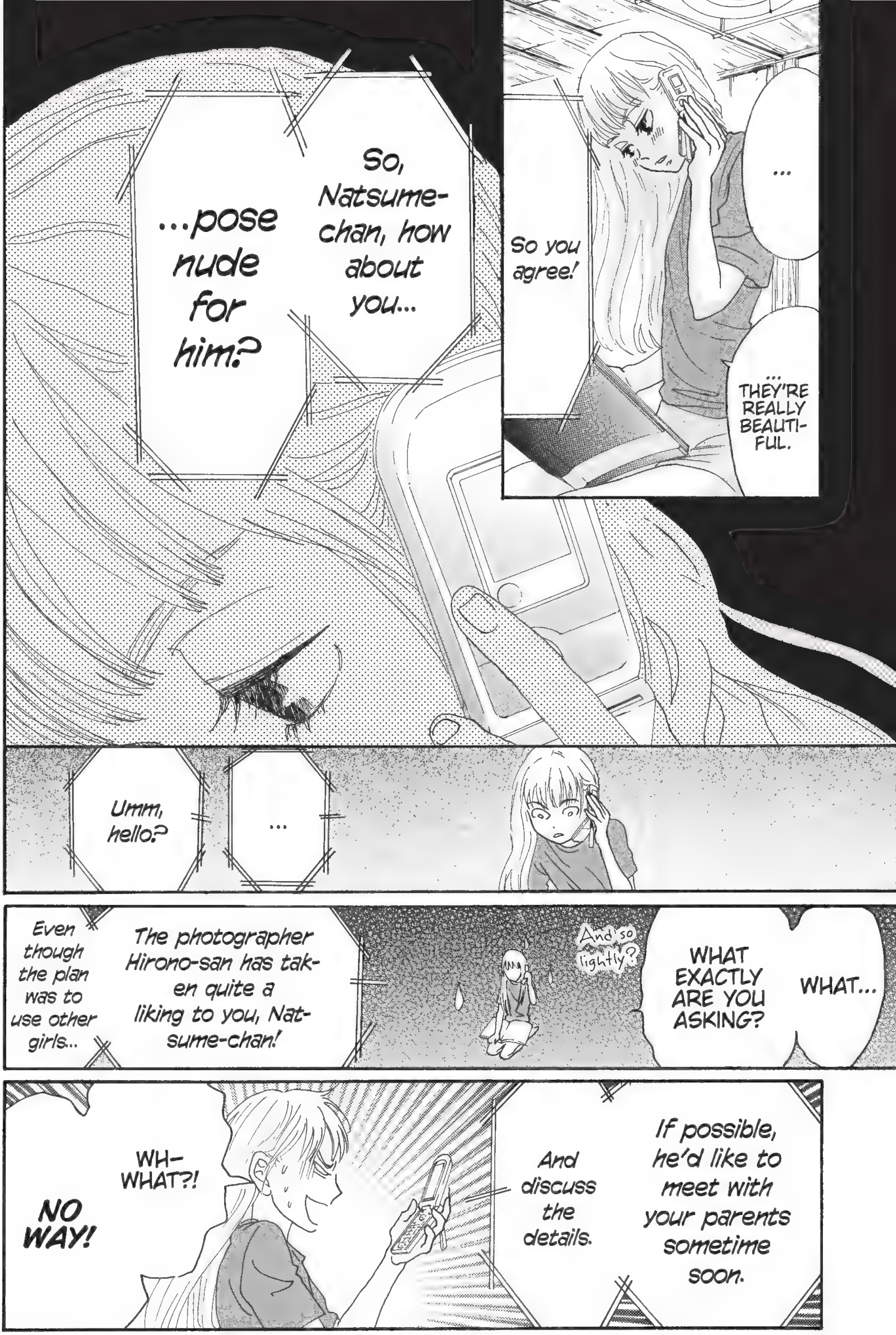

WAAAH!
わーん
I'M SORRY I EVER SAID ANYTHIN' BAD ABOUT YOU!
I GOT CAUGHT UP IN IT!
I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOU!
HEY, NOW.
YOU DON'T NEED TO SAY ALL THAT, HAYASE.
BUT...!
WE'RE REALLY SORRY, TOO!
LET'S BE FRIENDS, OKAY?
...
TH...
THANK YOU...!
WHOA...
THAT SURPRISED ME.
THOUGH, IT'S REALLY SOMEONE ELSE WHO NEEDS TO APOLOGIZE MORE!
It pisses me off!
HAYASE...
Just leave it!
THIS IS REALLY UNEXPECTED!

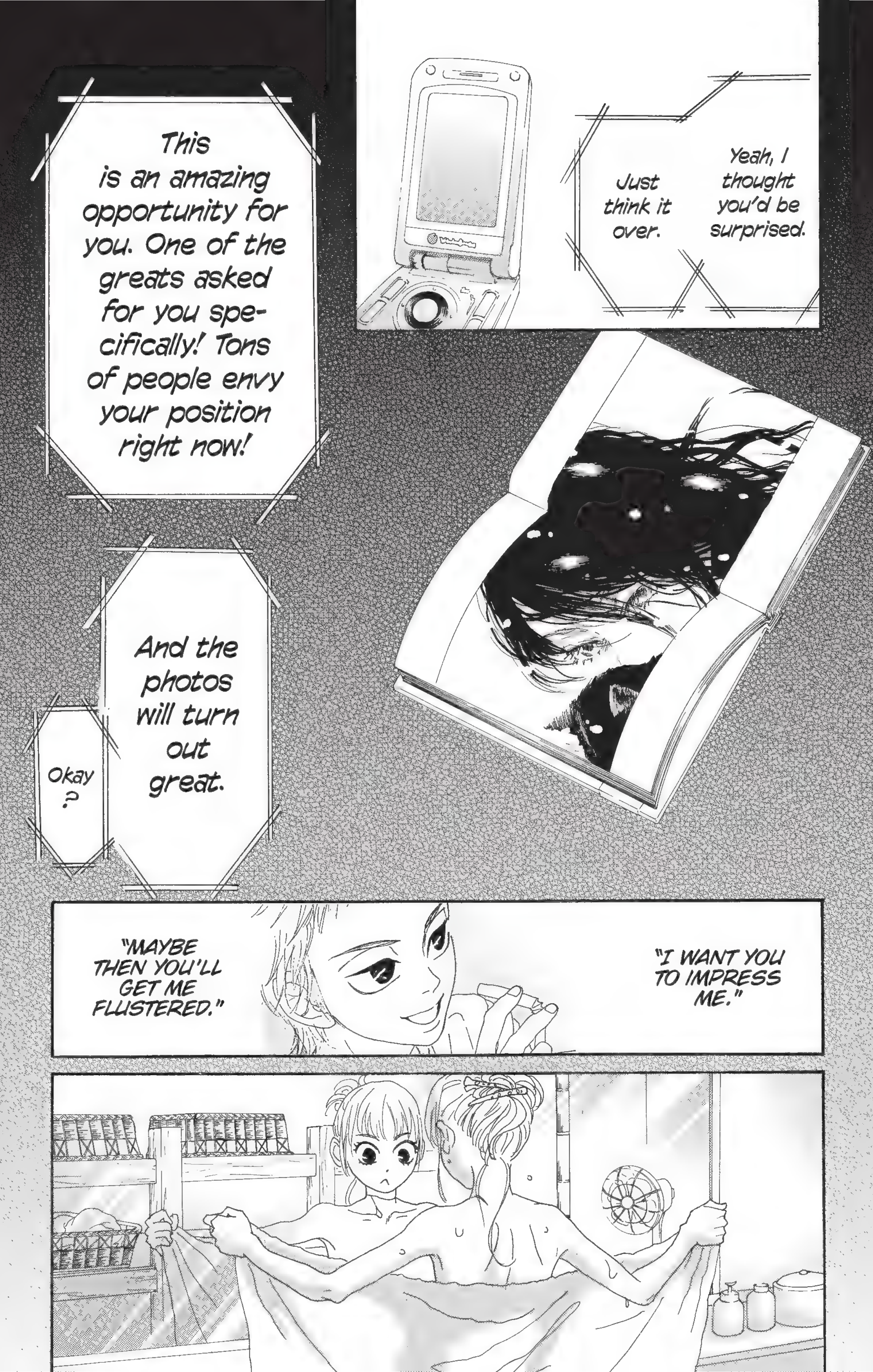

THE SHRINE'S SURE BUILDIN' UP QUICK!
IT'S ALL DUE TO THAT UNUSUAL CALM IN THE RIVER WE GET THIS TIME OF YEAR!
ALL THE MEN BORN 'ROUND HERE'LL SOON SPLIT INTO "PROTECTORS" AND "BURNERS" AND FIGHT OVER THIS BUILDING.
THEY'LL ALL WEAR HELMETS, TOO. THIS 'UN HAS THE POWER TO KNOCK ANYBODY FLAT REGARDLESS OF THAT PERSON'S TEAM!
BY THE WAY, THAT TREE IN THE MIDDLE'S FROM THE MOUNTAIN BEHIND YER PLACE, NATSUME-CHAN!
THE WHOLE AREA'S OFF-LIMITS TO WOMENFOLK FOR A WHOLE MONTH BEFORE THE FESTIVAL!
UM.
WAIT. CAN'T ONLY MEN OVER THE AGE OF 18 PARTICIPATE?
YEP. IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.
ALL THE MEN PARTICIPATIN' HAVE TO MAKE A VISIT TO THE SMALL SHRINE THERE FIRST.
IT MAY BE SMALL, BUT THAT'S S'POSED TO BE THE TRUE RESTING PLACE OF THE GOD HERE.
...IS THAT WHY KOU-CHAN WENT THERE?
LOOK!

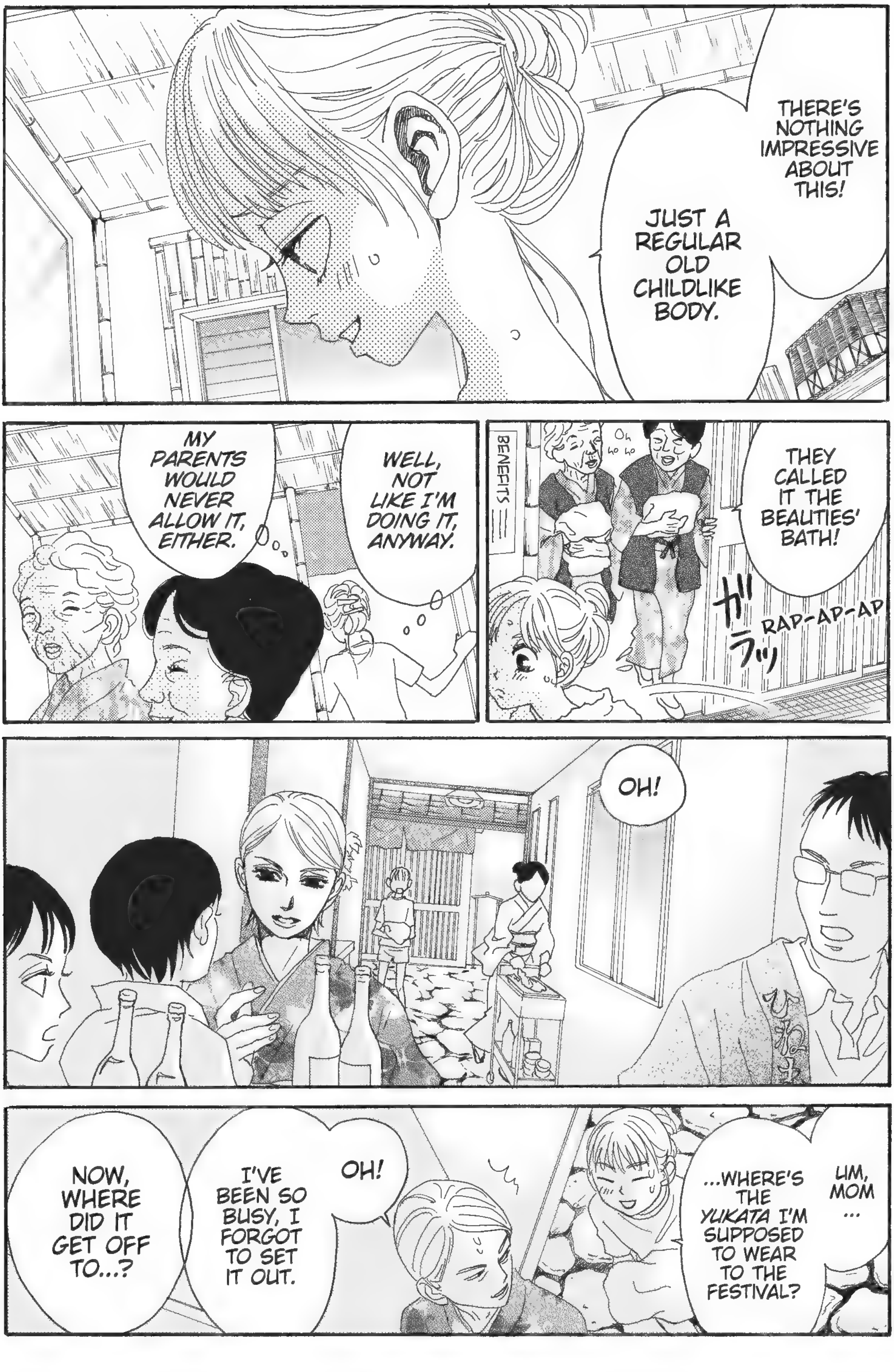

IT'S KOU-CHAN AND OTOMO!
HEY!
Y'ALL HAVIN' A LOOK BEFORE THE FESTIVAL?
WHY DON'T WE ALL WATCH TOGETHER?
NATSUME-CHAN'S COMING, TOO, KOU-CHAN!
YOU'LL GET TO SEE HER IN A *YUKATA*!
HEY! I NEVER SAID I'D WEAR THAT!
...
AW!
...I THOUGHT YOU'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT THAT WITH ALL THIS FESTIVAL BUSINESS...
THAT'S COLD! 'SPECIALLY FROM SOMEONE WHO ELOPED WITH YOU!

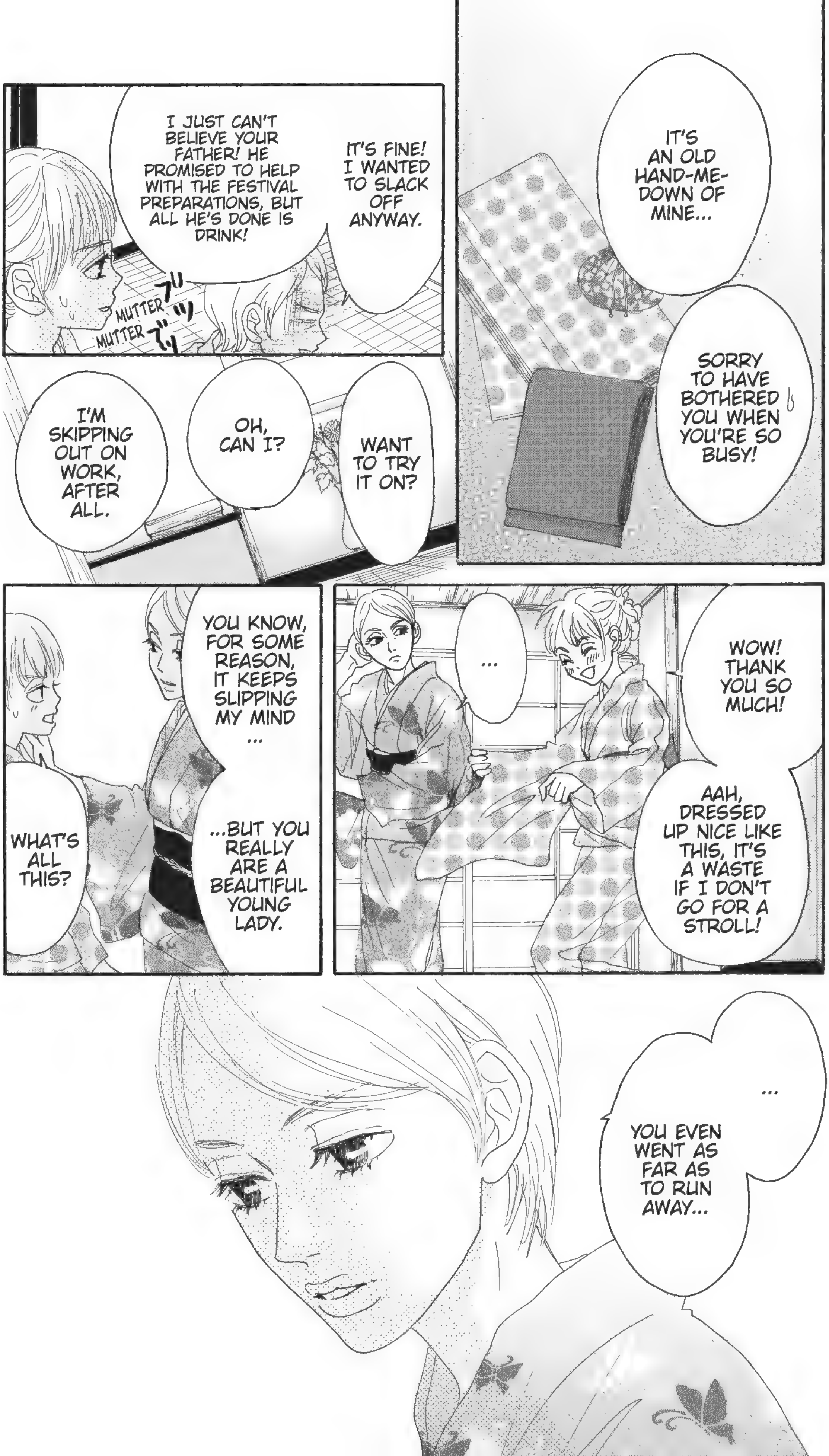

KOU-CHAN IS ACTING ABOUT HOW I EXPECTED.
THE THINGS THAT WERE SPECIAL TO ME...
...DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING AT ALL TO HIM.
I WONDER IF I CAN EVEN MAKE HIM MY ALLY, LET ALONE MY BOYFRIEND.
ひねもす屋
HINEMOSU INN
ひねもす屋
NATSUME MOCHIZUKI?
PACKAGE FOR YOU.
IT'S FROM MY MANAGER, DOI-SAN?
I WONDER...
ビッ RIIIP
ひねもす屋

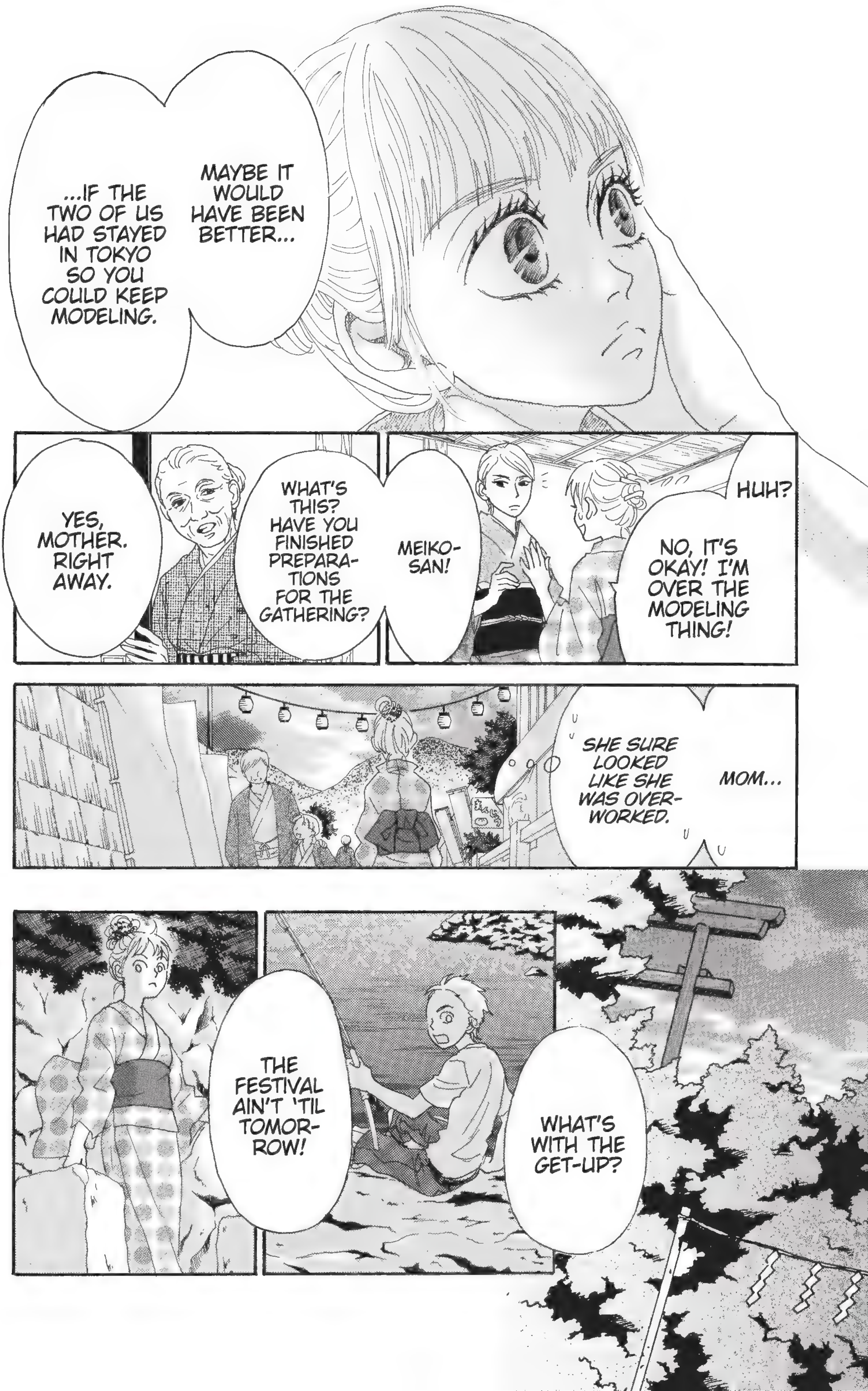

HELLO. DOI-SAN?
SHOGO HIRONO'S ORIGINS
広能晶吾の原点…
EXACTLY WHY DID YOU SEND THESE PHOTO-BOOKS?
If my parents see them...
C'mon, they're good, right? It's the famous photographer Shogo Hirono!
ハラ FLAP
FLAP パラ
IT'S NOT A QUESTION OF GOOD OR BAD ...
THE NUDITY—
FLAP パラ

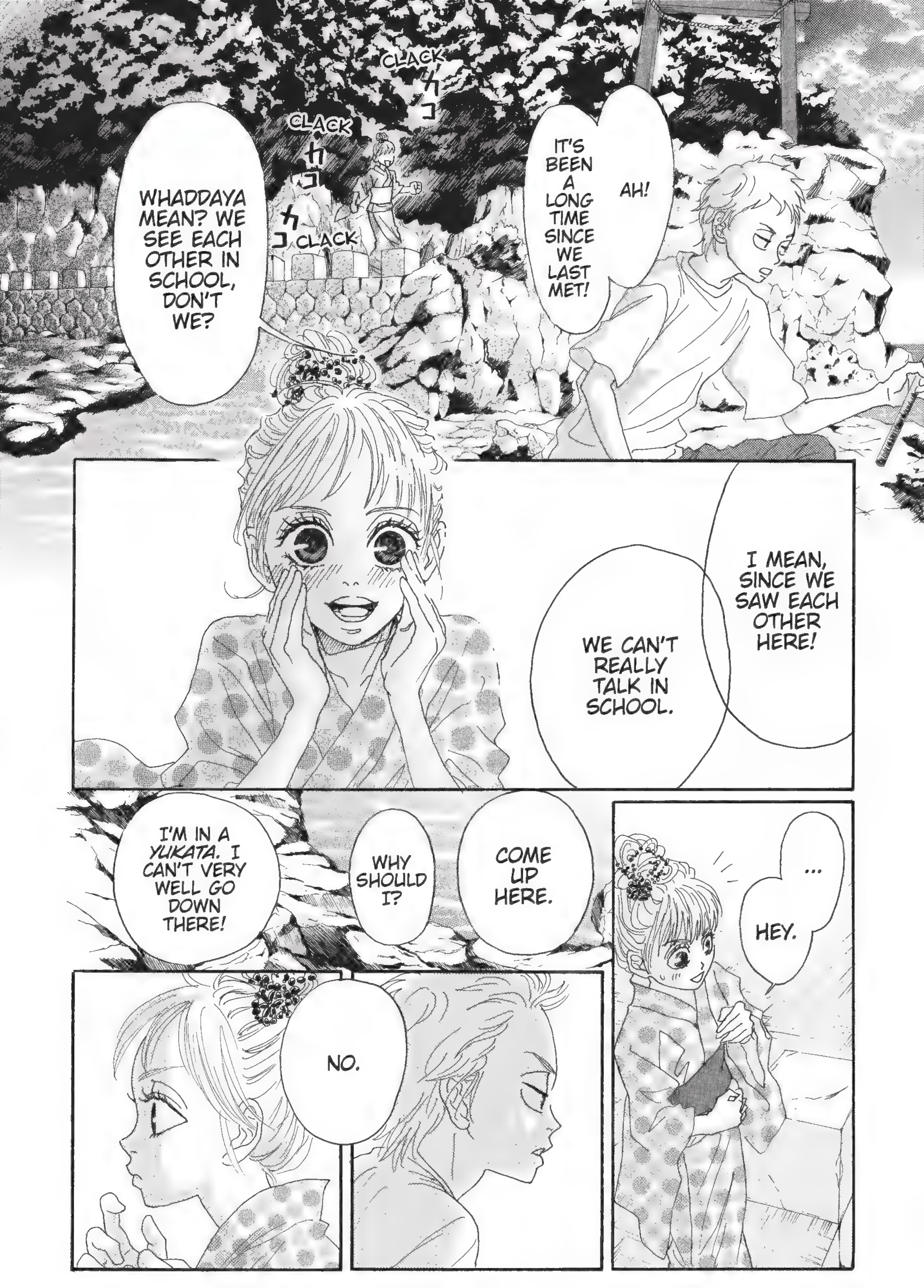

...
...THEY'RE REALLY BEAUTIFUL.
So you agree!
So, Natsume-chan, how about you...
...pose nude for him?
...
Umm, hello?
WHAT...
WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU ASKING?
And so lightly?
The photographer Hirono-san has taken quite a liking to you, Natsume-chan!
Even though the plan was to use other girls...
If possible, he'd like to meet with your parents sometime soon.
And discuss the details.
WH-WHAT?!
NO WAY!

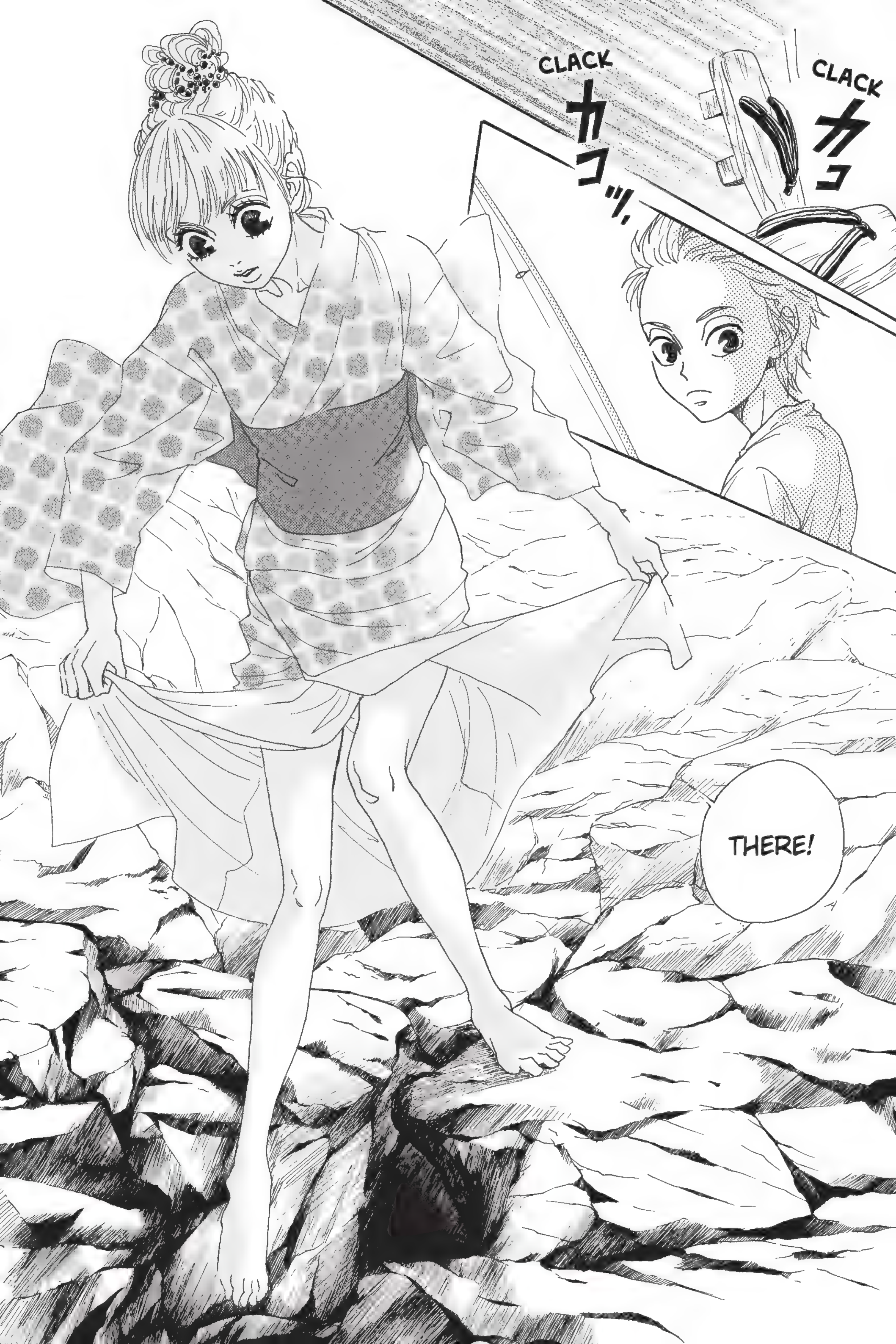

Yeah, I thought you'd be surprised.
Just think it over.
This is an amazing opportunity for you. One of the greats asked for you specifically! Tons of people envy your position right now!
And the photos will turn out great.
Okay?
"I WANT YOU TO IMPRESS ME."
"MAYBE THEN YOU'LL GET ME FLUSTERED."

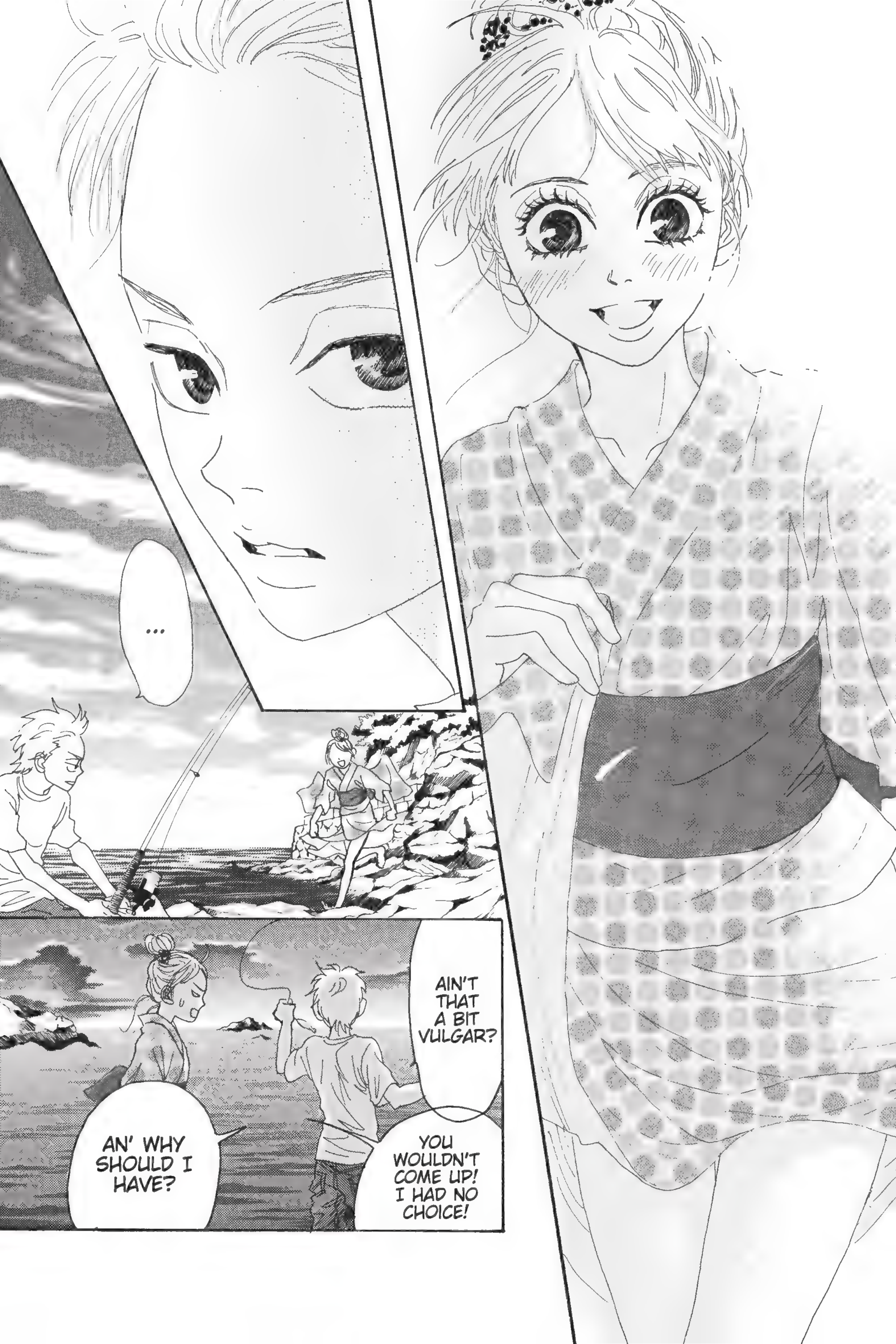

THERE'S NOTHING IMPRESSIVE ABOUT THIS!
JUST A REGULAR OLD CHILDLIKE BODY.
BENEFITS
Oh ho ho
THEY CALLED IT THE BEAUTIES' BATH!
ガラッ RAP-AP-AP
WELL, NOT LIKE I'M DOING IT, ANYWAY.
MY PARENTS WOULD NEVER ALLOW IT, EITHER.
OH!
UM, MOM...
...WHERE'S THE *YUKATA* I'M SUPPOSED TO WEAR TO THE FESTIVAL?
OH!
I'VE BEEN SO BUSY, I FORGOT TO SET IT OUT.
NOW, WHERE DID IT GET OFF TO...?

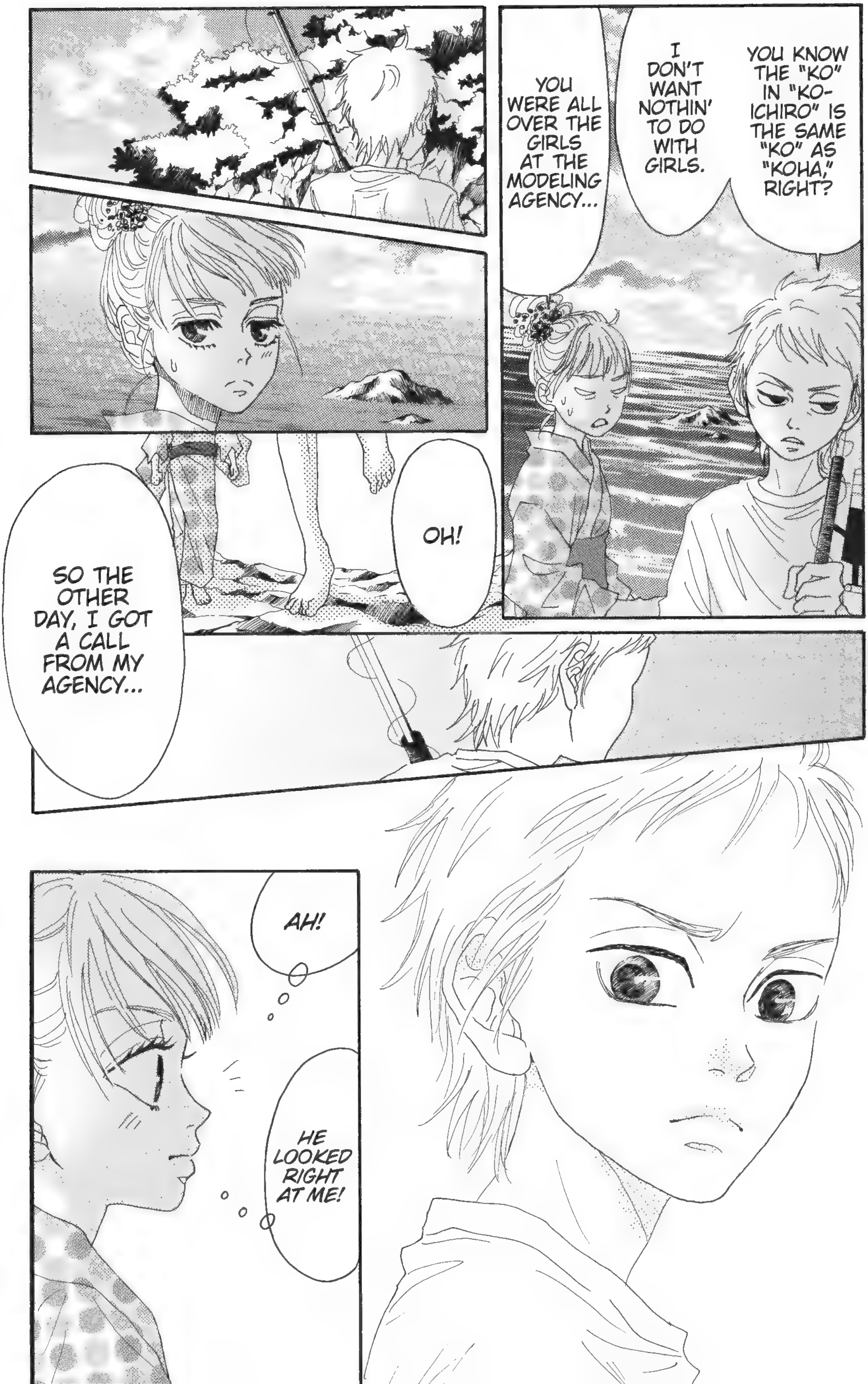

IT'S AN OLD HAND-ME-DOWN OF MINE...
SORRY TO HAVE BOTHERED YOU WHEN YOU'RE SO BUSY!
IT'S FINE! I WANTED TO SLACK OFF ANYWAY.
I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE YOUR FATHER! HE PROMISED TO HELP WITH THE FESTIVAL PREPARATIONS, BUT ALL HE'S DONE IS DRINK!
ブツ MUTTER
ブツ MUTTER
WANT TO TRY IT ON?
OH, CAN I?
I'M SKIPPING OUT ON WORK, AFTER ALL.
WOW! THANK YOU SO MUCH!
AAH, DRESSED UP NICE LIKE THIS, IT'S A WASTE IF I DON'T GO FOR A STROLL!
...
YOU KNOW, FOR SOME REASON, IT KEEPS SLIPPING MY MIND ...
...BUT YOU REALLY ARE A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LADY.
WHAT'S ALL THIS?
... YOU EVEN WENT AS FAR AS TO RUN AWAY...

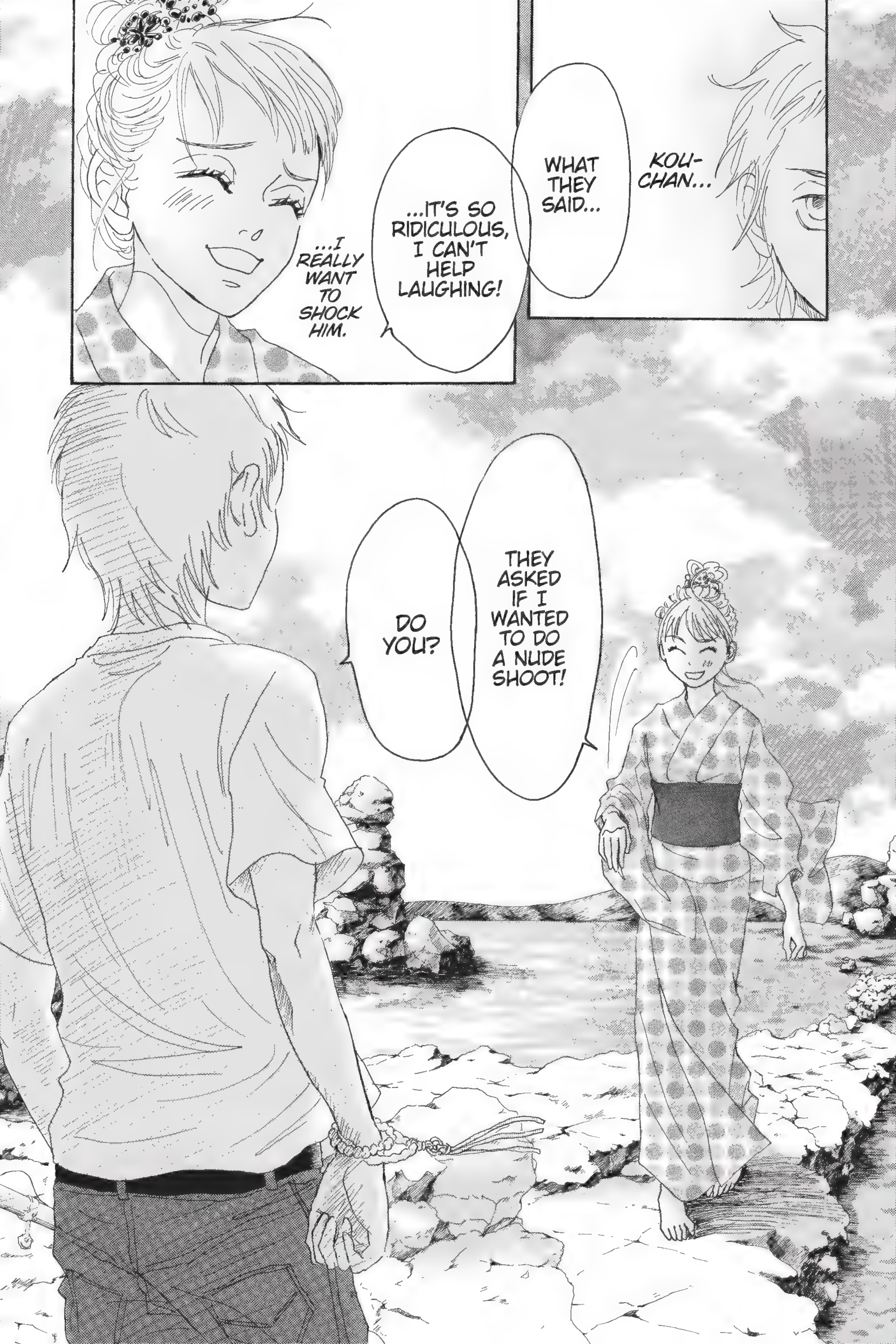

MAYBE IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER...
...IF THE TWO OF US HAD STAYED IN TOKYO SO YOU COULD KEEP MODELING.
HUH?
NO, IT'S OKAY! I'M OVER THE MODELING THING!
MEIKO-SAN!
WHAT'S THIS? HAVE YOU FINISHED PREPARATIONS FOR THE GATHERING?
YES, MOTHER. RIGHT AWAY.
MOM...
SHE SURE LOOKED LIKE SHE WAS OVERWORKED.
WHAT'S WITH THE GET-UP?
THE FESTIVAL AIN'T 'TIL TOMORROW!

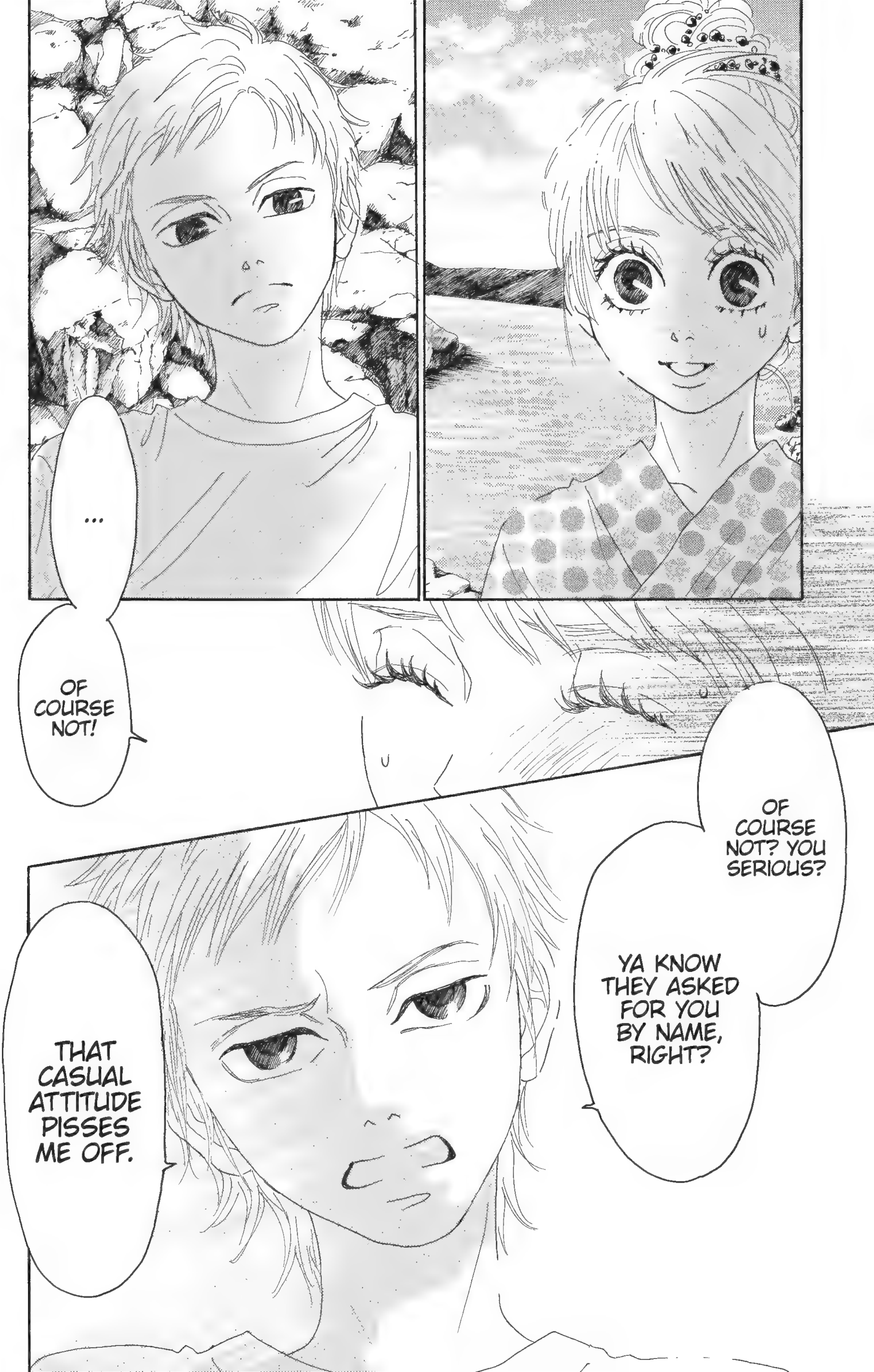

CLACK カコ
CLACK カコ
カコ CLACK
AH!
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE LAST MET!
WHADDAYA MEAN? WE SEE EACH OTHER IN SCHOOL, DON'T WE?
I MEAN, SINCE WE SAW EACH OTHER HERE!
WE CAN'T REALLY TALK IN SCHOOL.
...
HEY.
COME UP HERE.
WHY SHOULD I?
I'M IN A *YUKATA*. I CAN'T VERY WELL GO DOWN THERE!
NO.

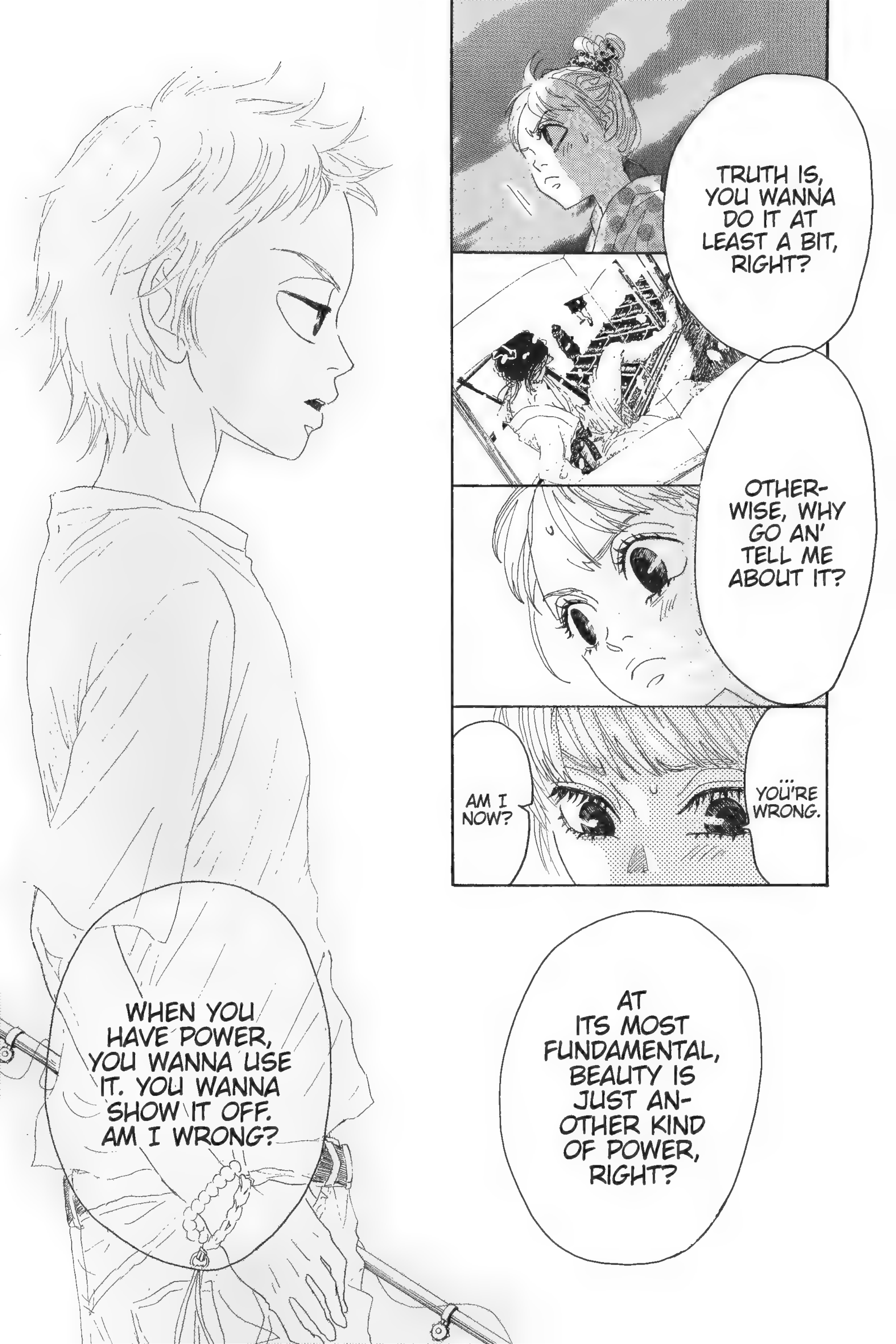

CLACK
カッ
CLACK
カコッ
THERE!

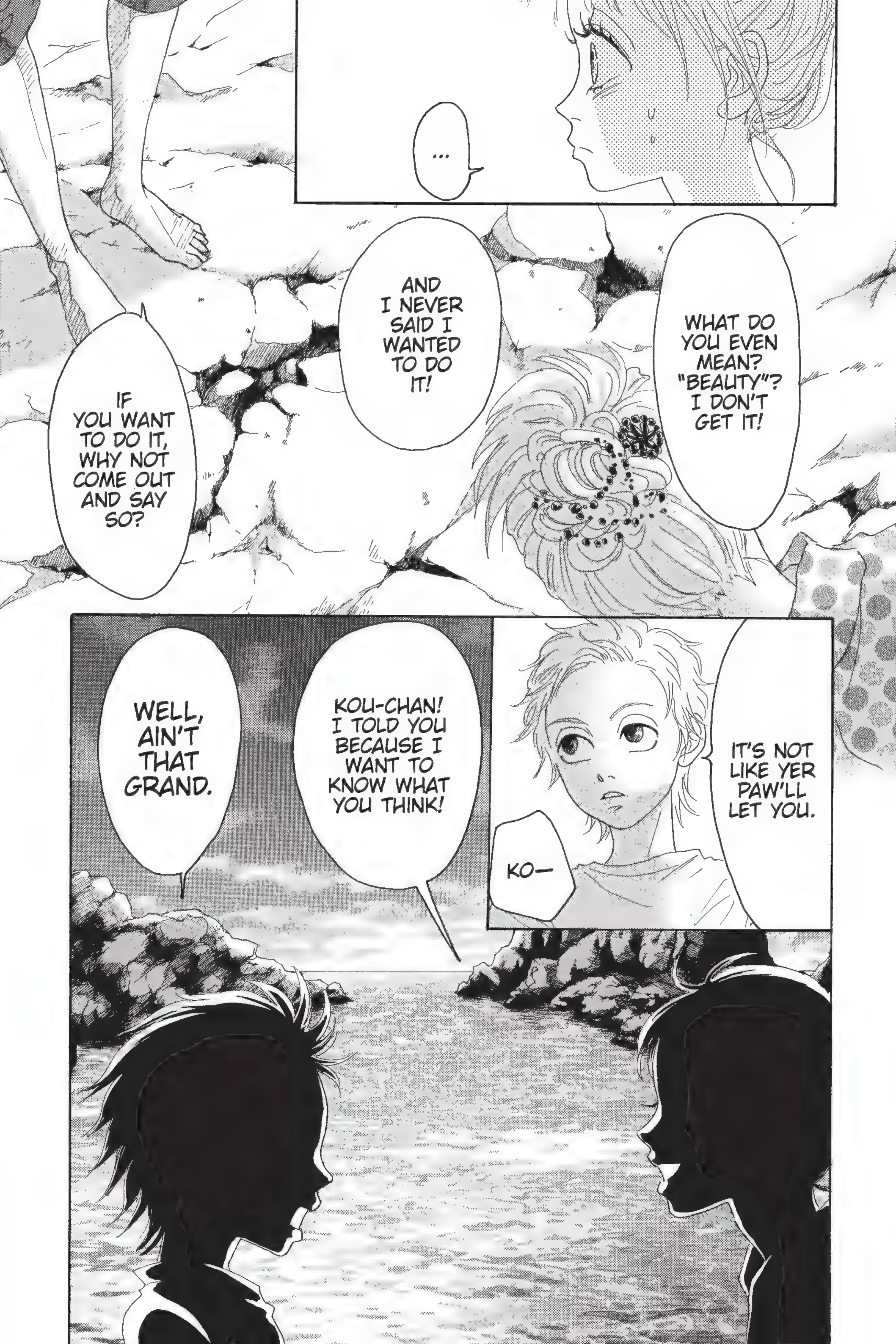

...
AIN'T THAT A BIT VULGAR?
YOU WOULDN'T COME UP! I HAD NO CHOICE!
AN' WHY SHOULD I HAVE?

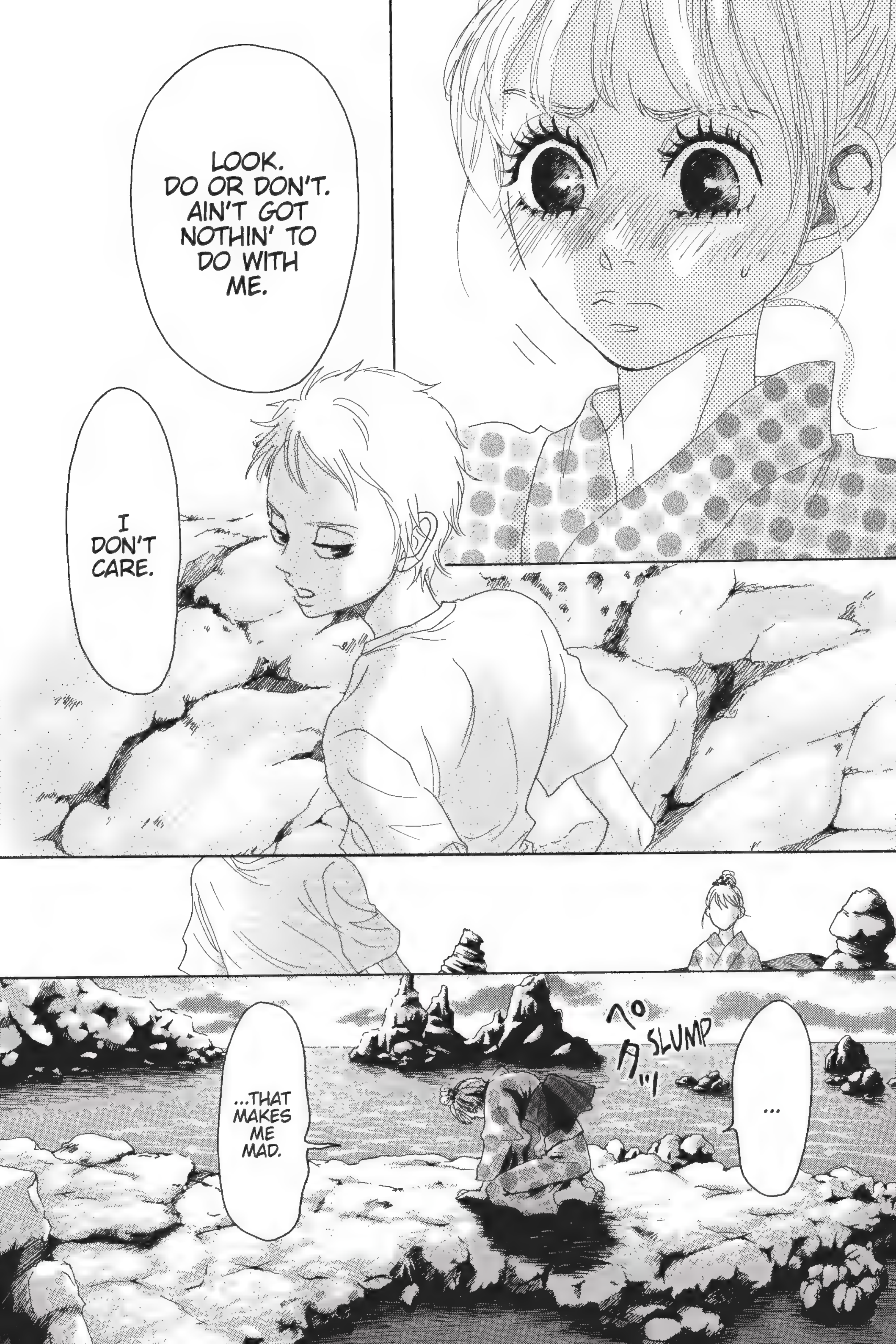

YOU KNOW THE "KO" IN "KO-ICHIRO" IS THE SAME "KO" AS "KOHA," RIGHT?
I DON'T WANT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH GIRLS.
YOU WERE ALL OVER THE GIRLS AT THE MODELING AGENCY...
OH!
SO THE OTHER DAY, I GOT A CALL FROM MY AGENCY...
AH!
HE LOOKED RIGHT AT ME!

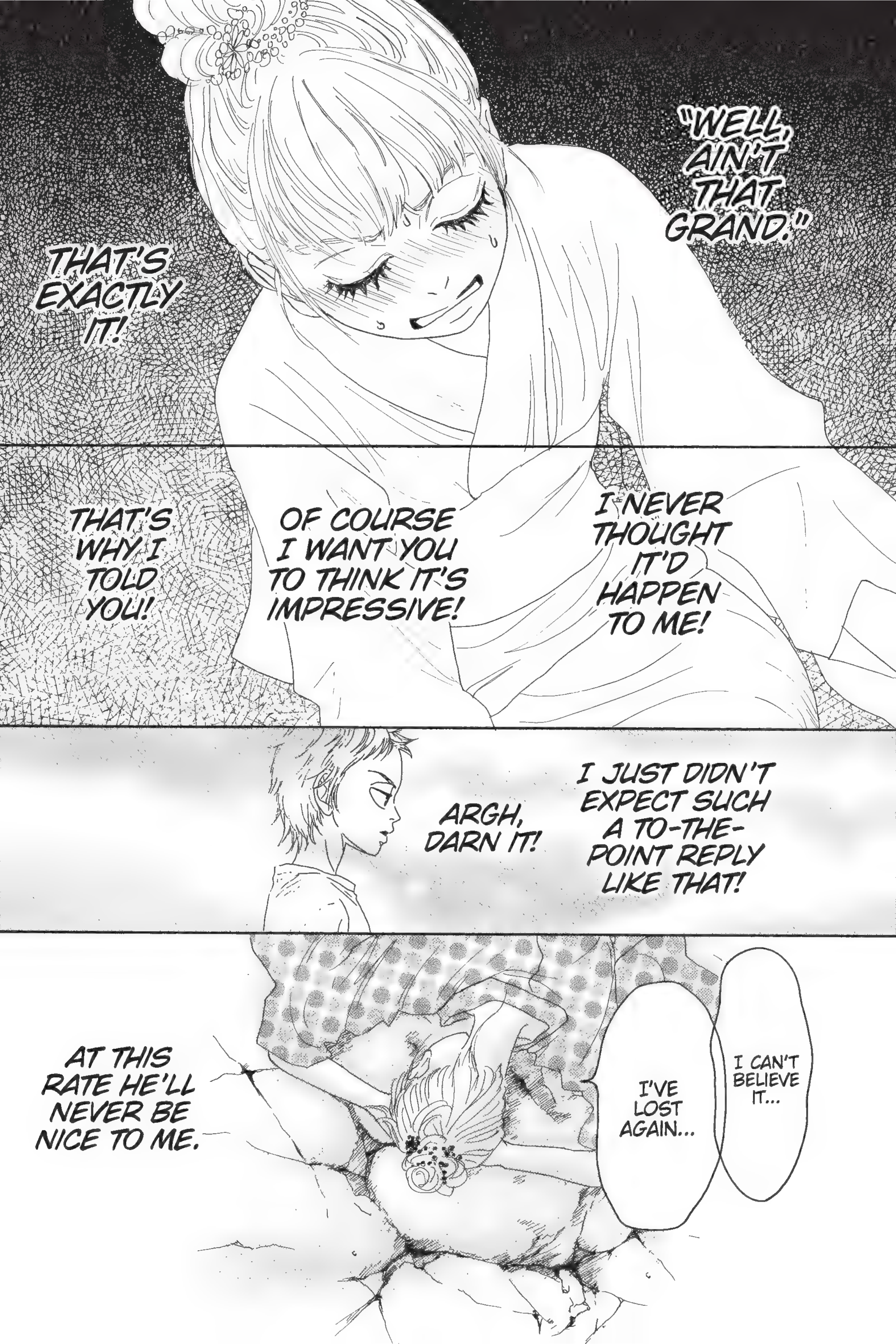

KOU-CHAN...
WHAT THEY SAID...
...IT'S SO RIDICULOUS, I CAN'T HELP LAUGHING!
...I REALLY WANT TO SHOCK HIM.
THEY ASKED IF I WANTED TO DO A NUDE SHOOT!
DO YOU?

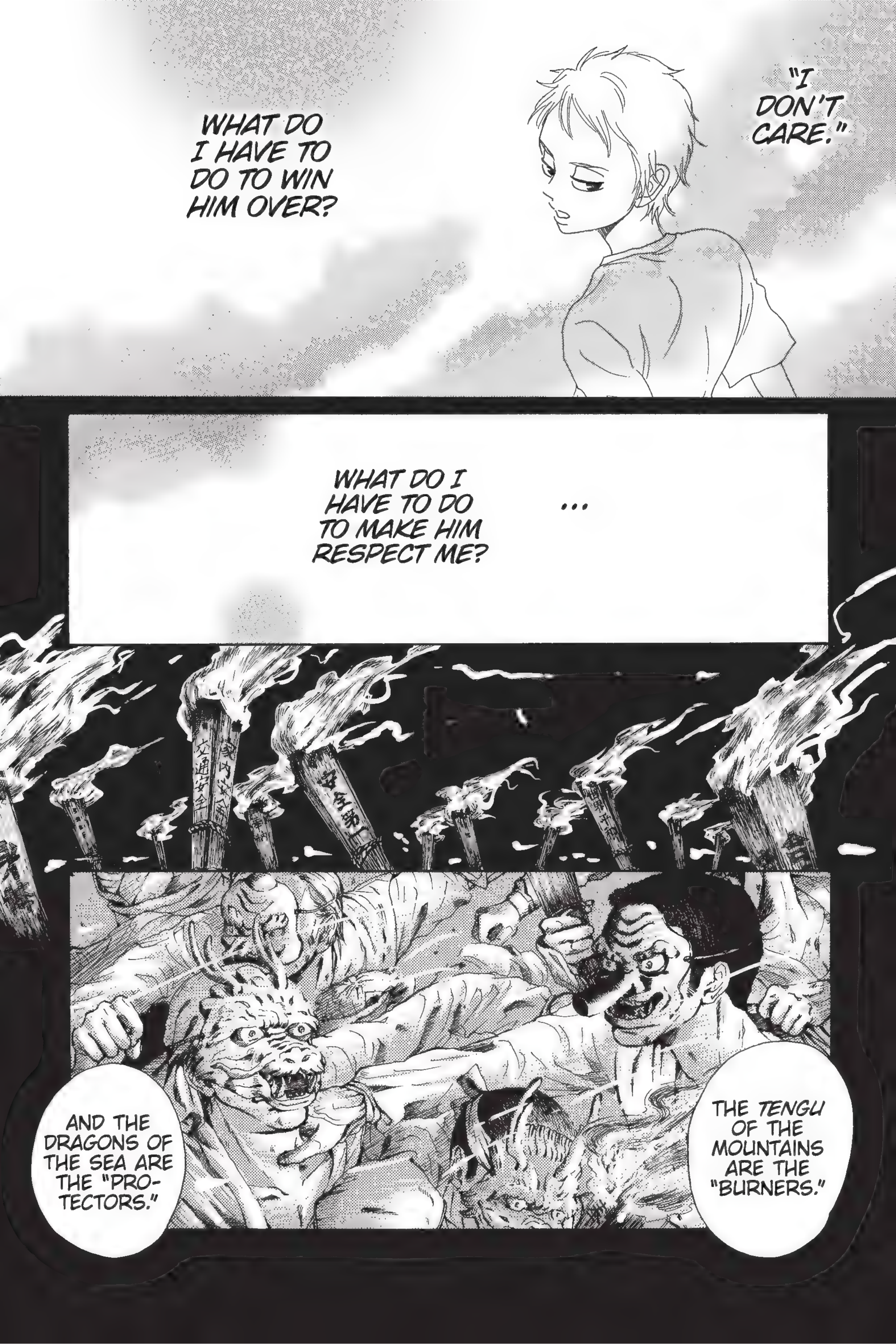

...
OF COURSE NOT!
OF COURSE NOT? YOU SERIOUS?
YA KNOW THEY ASKED FOR YOU BY NAME, RIGHT?
THAT CASUAL ATTITUDE PISSES ME OFF.

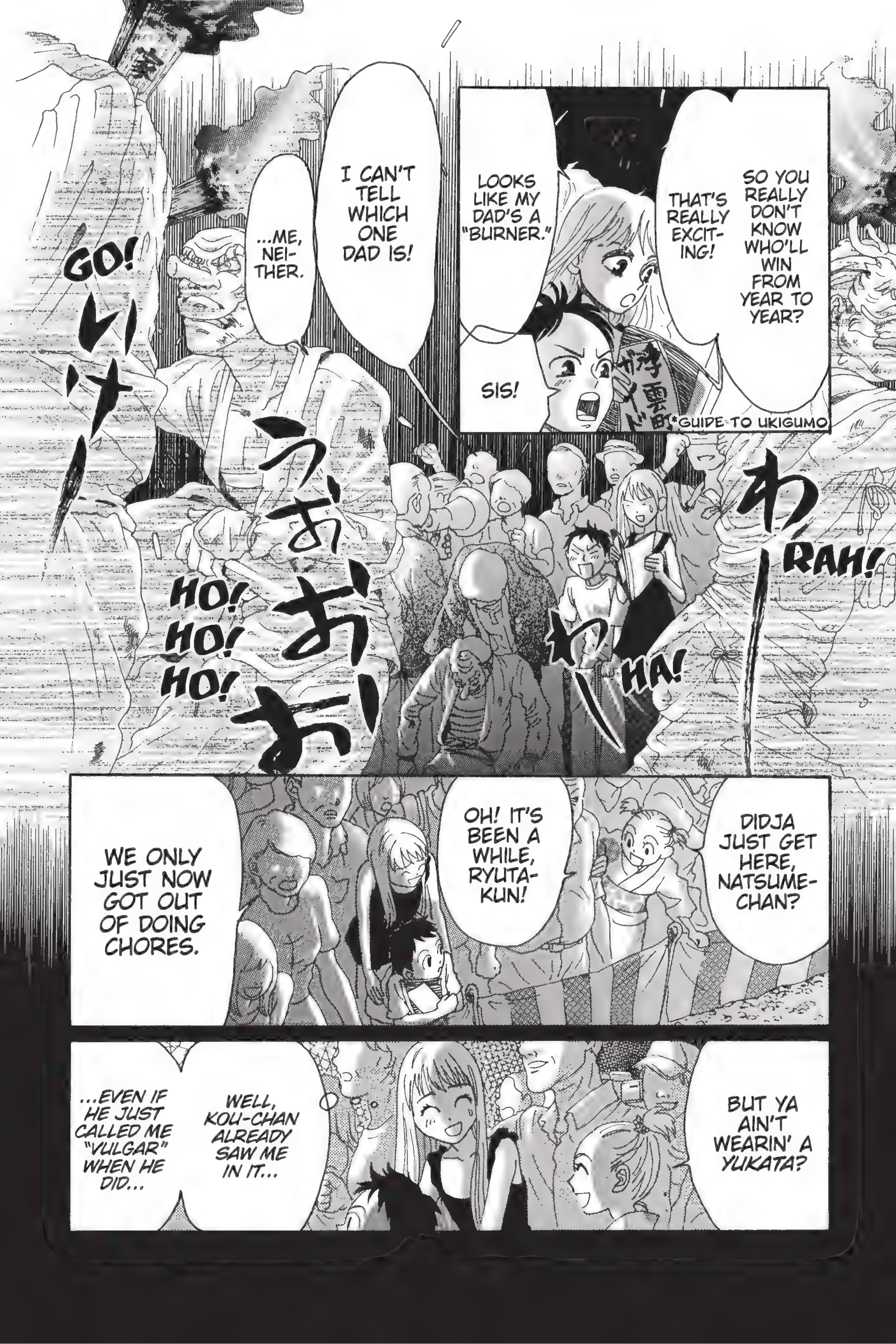

TRUTH IS, YOU WANNA DO IT AT LEAST A BIT, RIGHT?
OTHER-WISE, WHY GO AN' TELL ME ABOUT IT?
...YOU'RE WRONG.
AM I NOW?
AT ITS MOST FUNDAMENTAL, BEAUTY IS JUST AN-OTHER KIND OF POWER, RIGHT?
WHEN YOU HAVE POWER, YOU WANNA USE IT. YOU WANNA SHOW IT OFF. AM I WRONG?

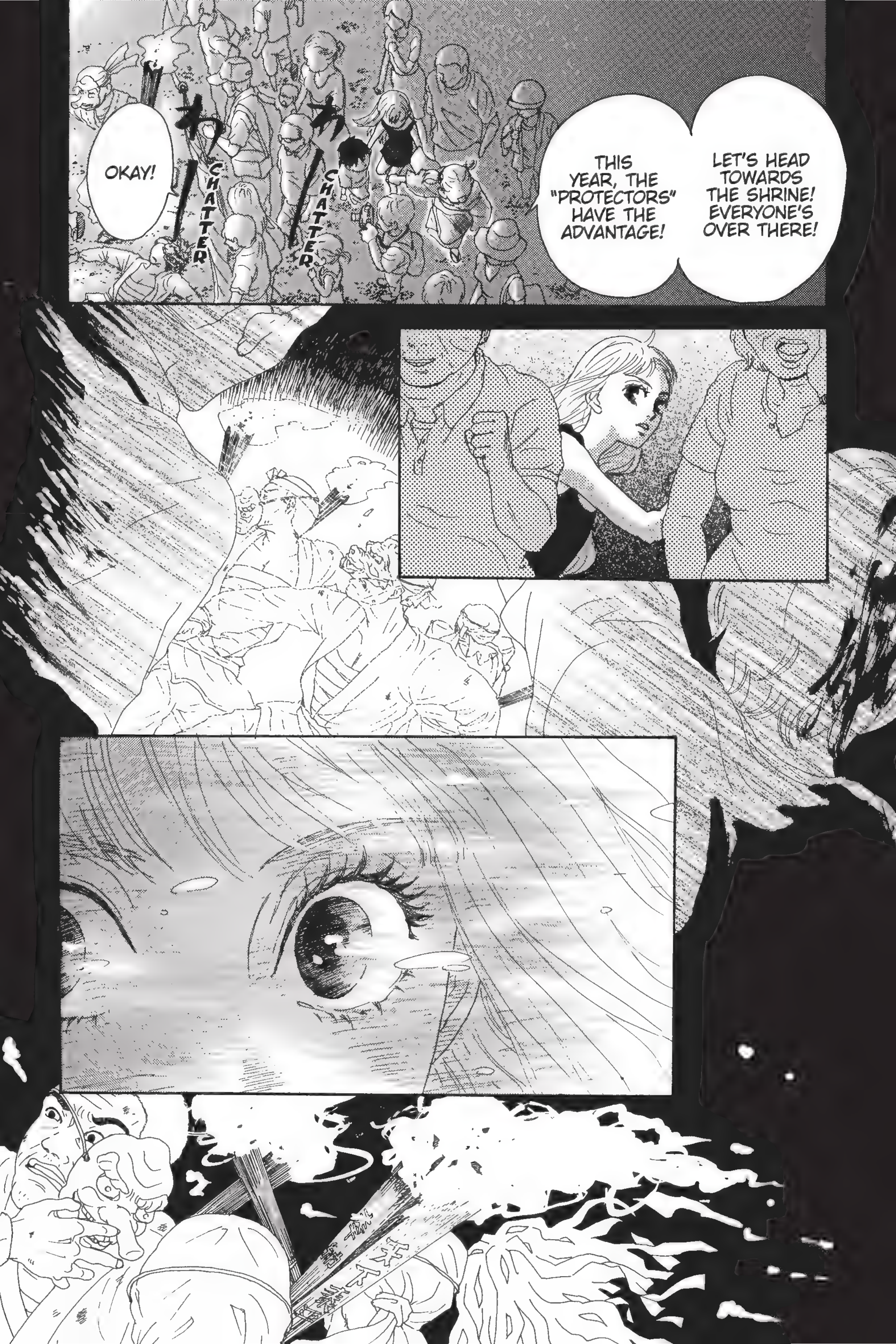

...
WHAT DO YOU EVEN MEAN? "BEAUTY"? I DON'T GET IT!
AND I NEVER SAID I WANTED TO DO IT!
IF YOU WANT TO DO IT, WHY NOT COME OUT AND SAY SO?
IT'S NOT LIKE YER PAW'LL LET YOU.
KO—
KOU-CHAN! I TOLD YOU BECAUSE I WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!
WELL, AIN'T THAT GRAND.

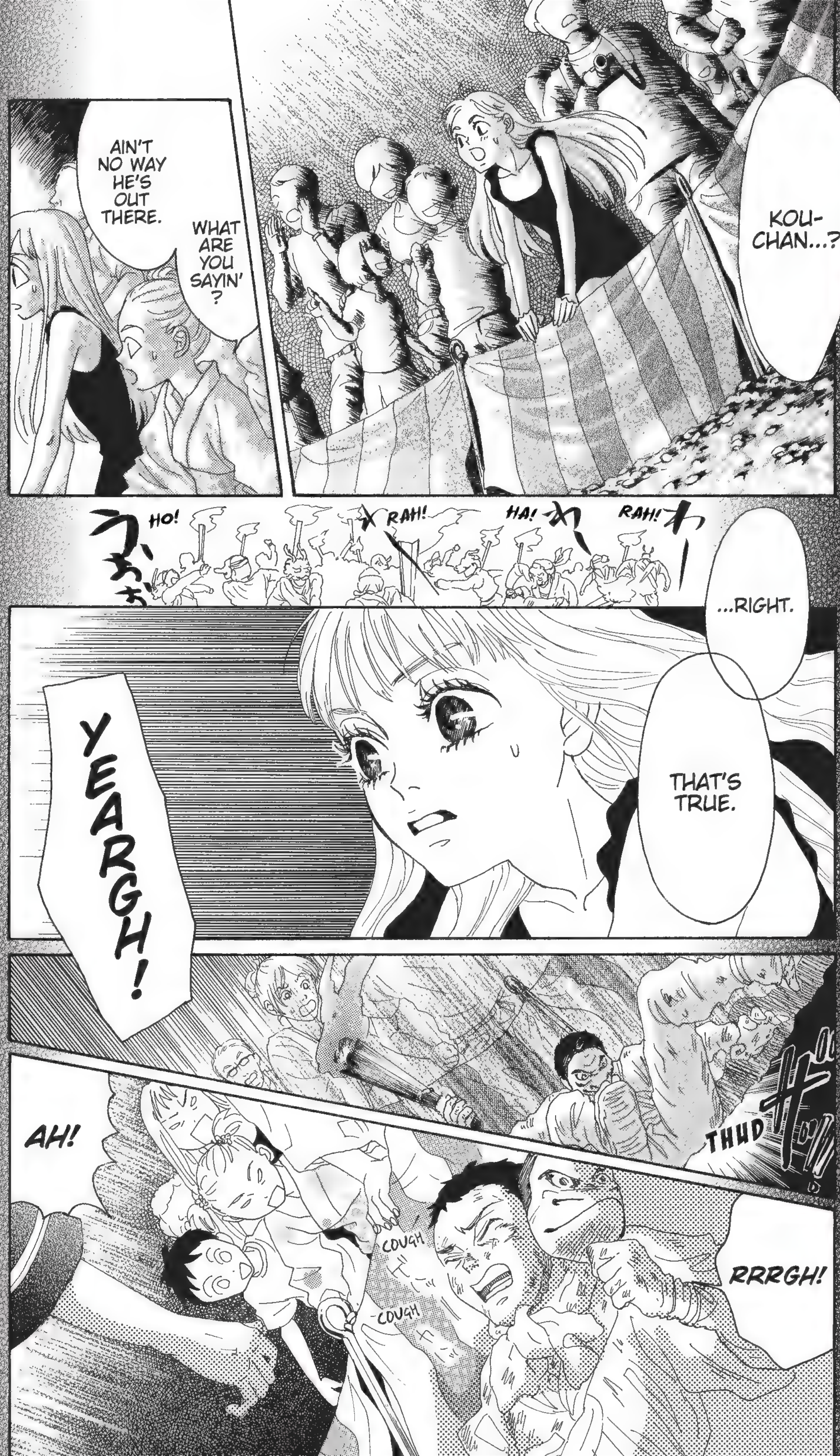

LOOK. DO OR DON'T. AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH ME.
I DON'T CARE.
...
ペタッ
SLUMP
...THAT MAKES ME MAD.

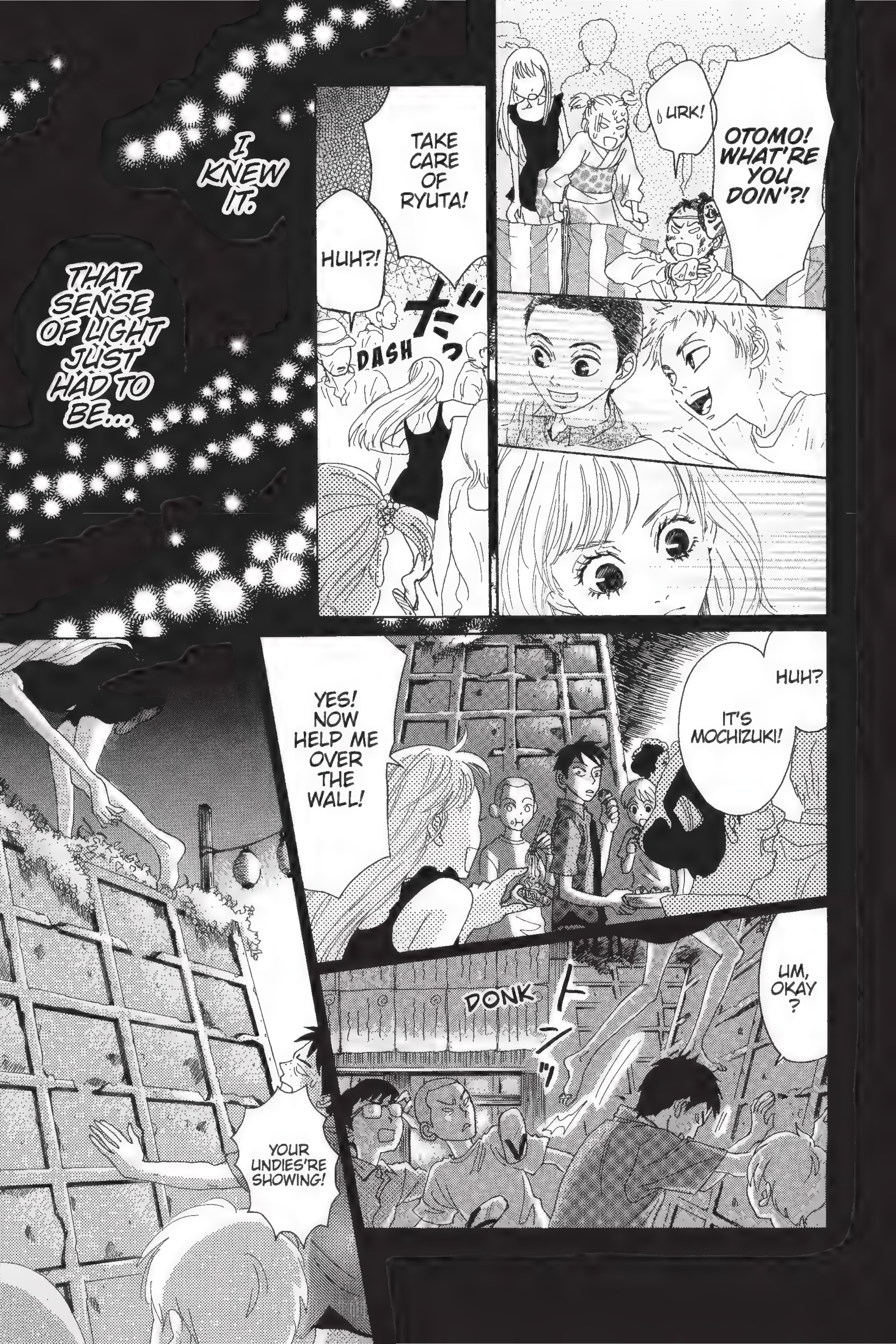

"WELL, AIN'T THAT GRAND."
THAT'S EXACTLY IT!
I NEVER THOUGHT IT'D HAPPEN TO ME!
OF COURSE I WANT YOU TO THINK IT'S IMPRESSIVE!
THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU!
I JUST DIDN'T EXPECT SUCH A TO-THE-POINT REPLY LIKE THAT!
ARGH, DARN IT!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...
I'VE LOST AGAIN...
AT THIS RATE HE'LL NEVER BE NICE TO ME.

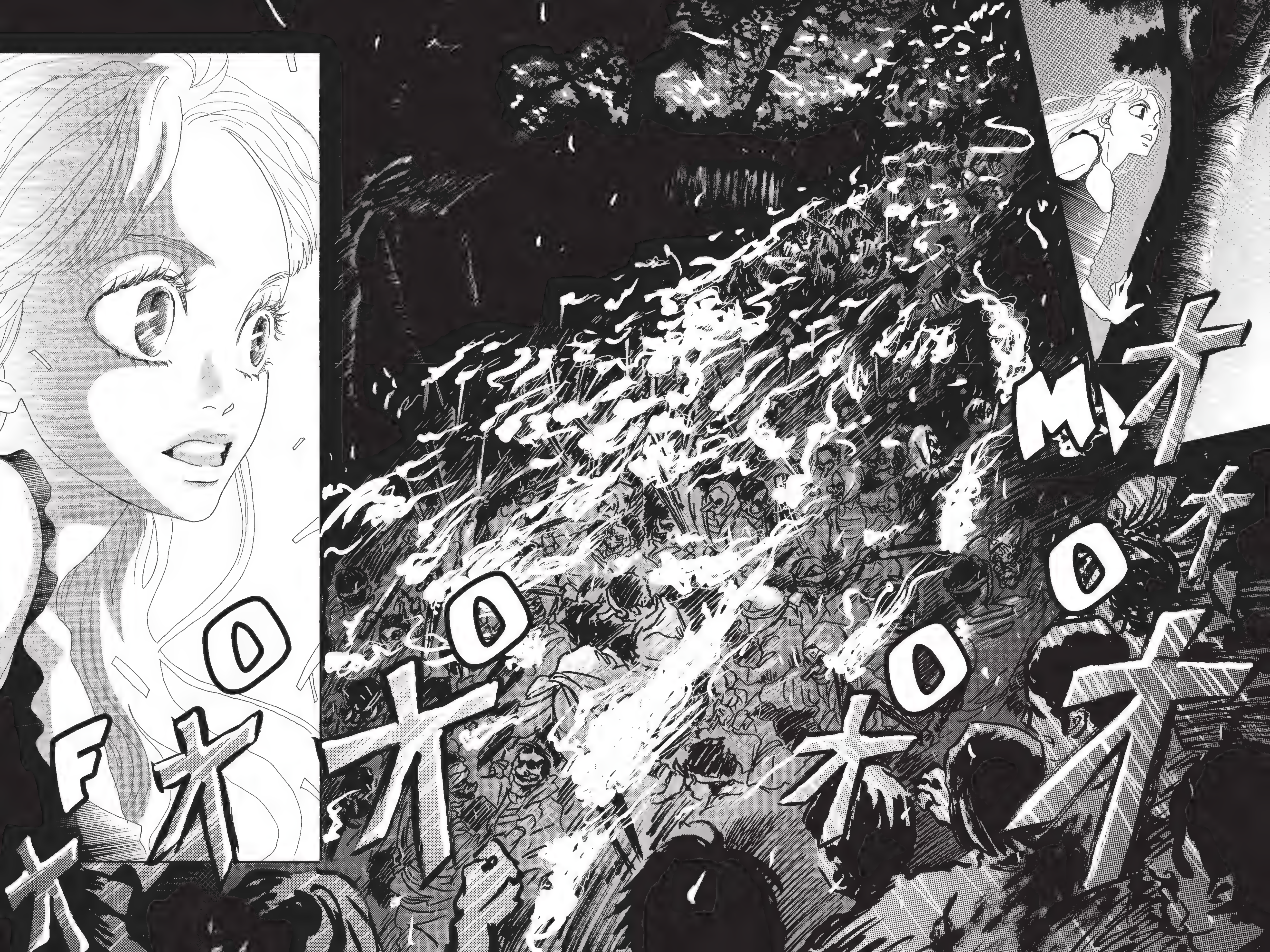

"I DON'T CARE."
WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO WIN HIM OVER?
...
WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO MAKE HIM RESPECT ME?
家内安全
交通安全
安全第一
世界平和
THE *TENGU* OF THE MOUNTAINS ARE THE "BURNERS."
AND THE DRAGONS OF THE SEA ARE THE "PROTECTORS."

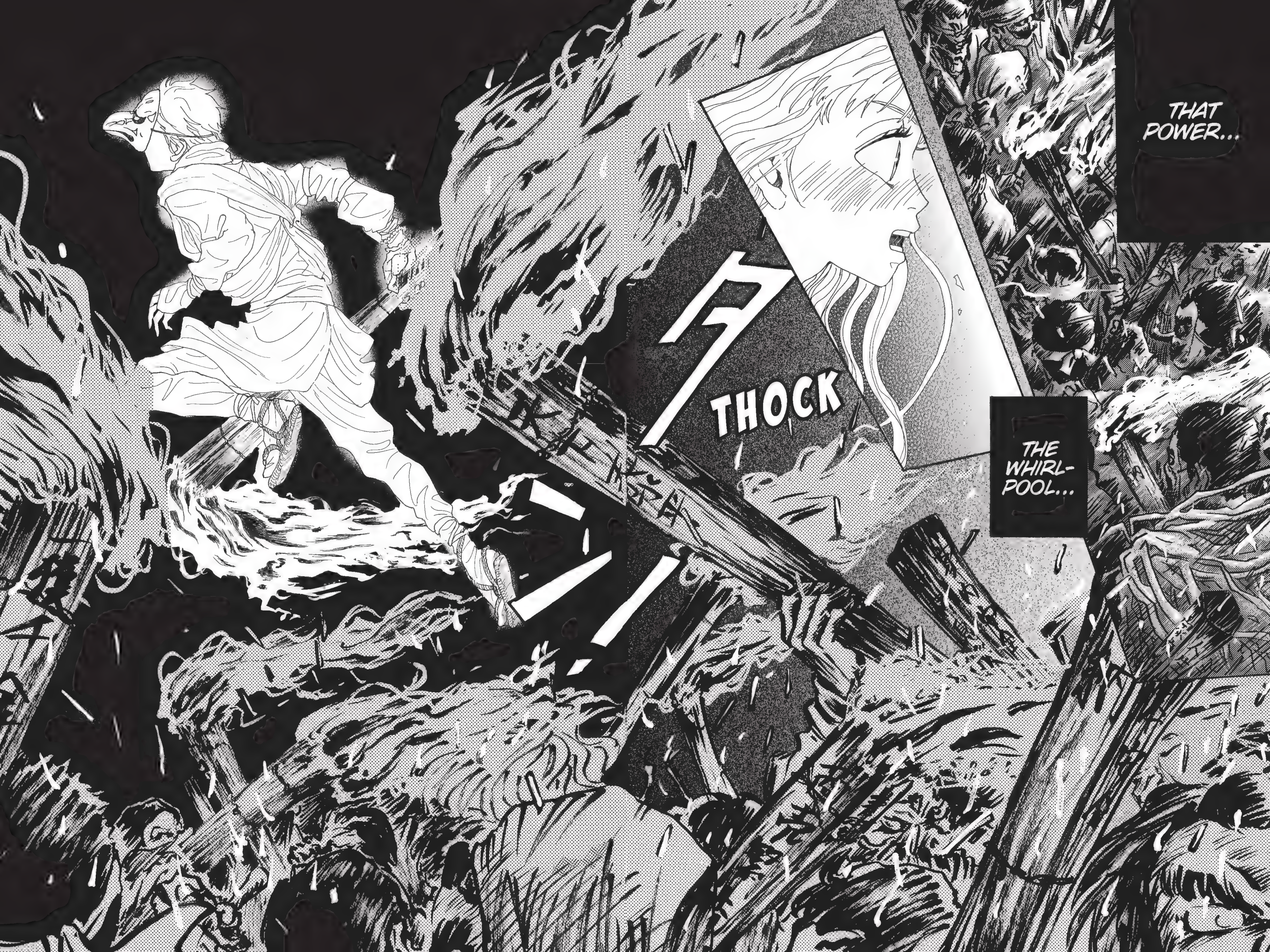

SO YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW WHO'LL WIN FROM YEAR TO YEAR?
THAT'S REALLY EXCITING!
LOOKS LIKE MY DAD'S A "BURNER."
浮雲ガイド
*GUIDE TO UKIGUMO
SIS!
I CAN'T TELL WHICH ONE DAD IS!
...ME, NEITHER.
わ
RAH!
わ
HA!
うあおおお
HO! HO! HO!
GO!
いけー!
DIDJA JUST GET HERE, NATSUME-CHAN?
OH! IT'S BEEN A WHILE, RYUTA-KUN!
WE ONLY JUST NOW GOT OUT OF DOING CHORES.
BUT YA AIN'T WEARIN' A YUKATA?
WELL, KOU-CHAN ALREADY SAW ME IN IT...
...EVEN IF HE JUST CALLED ME "VULGAR" WHEN HE DID...

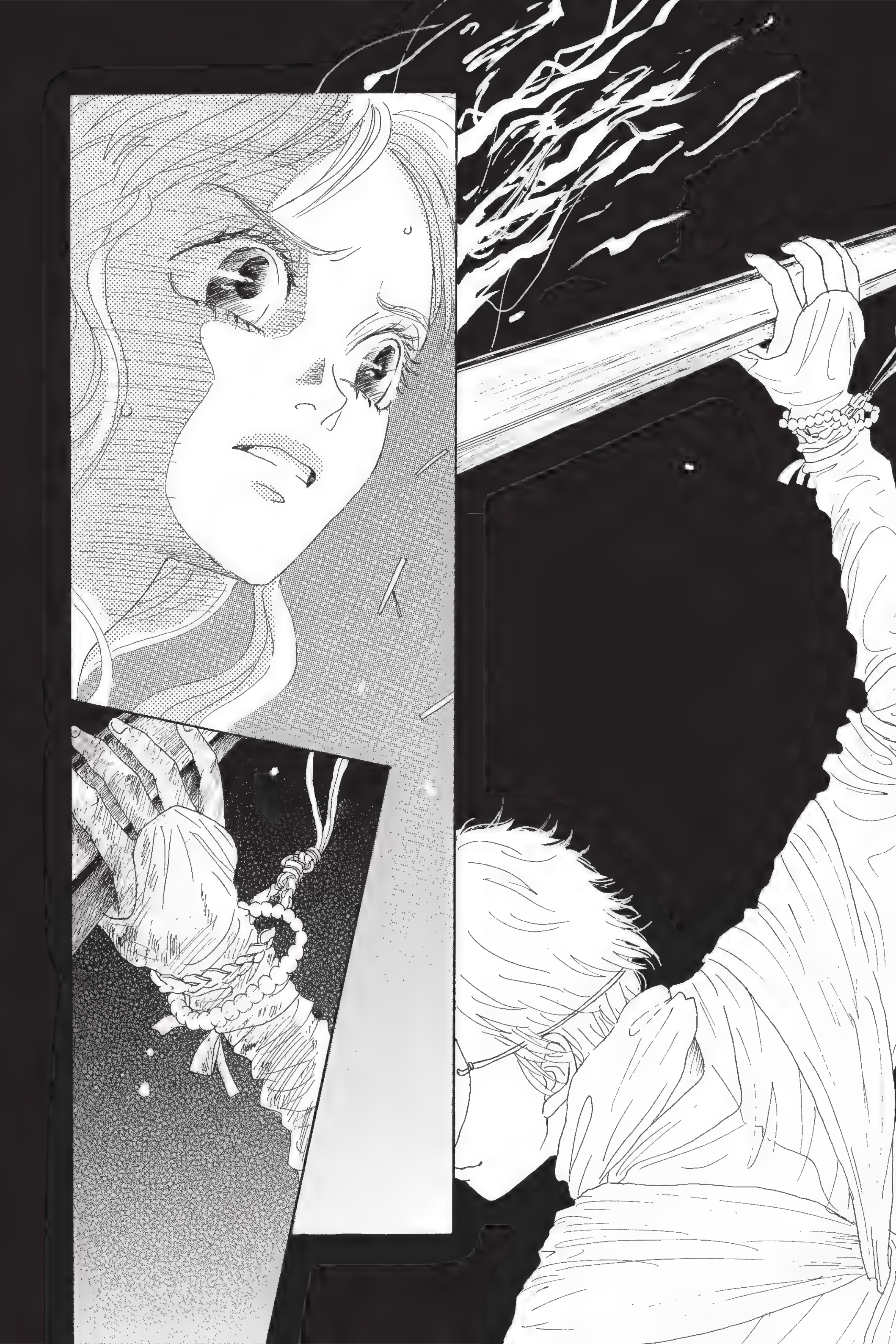

LET'S HEAD TOWARDS THE SHRINE! EVERYONE'S OVER THERE!
THIS YEAR, THE "PROTECTORS" HAVE THE ADVANTAGE!
CHATTER
CHATTER
OKAY!

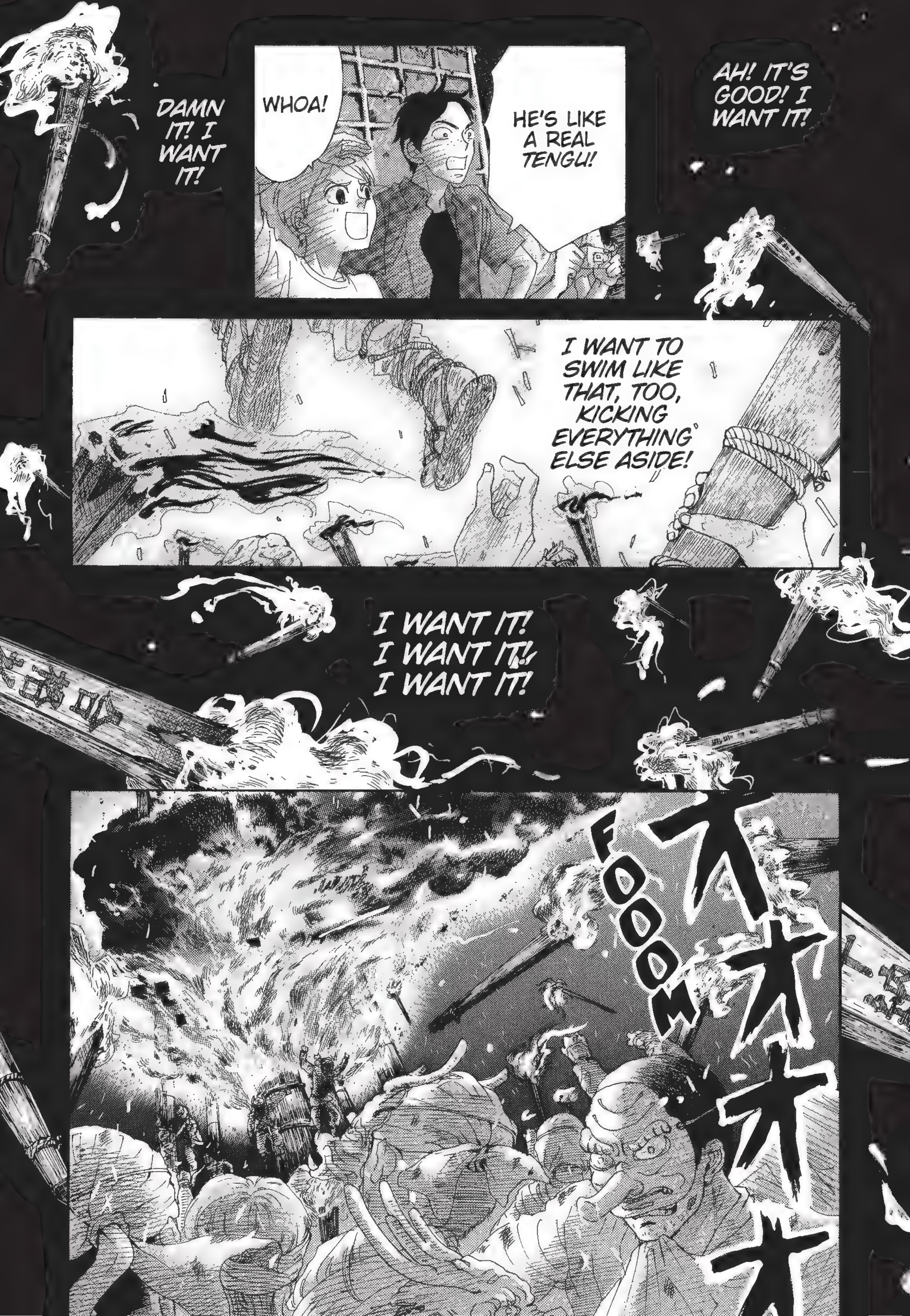

KOU-CHAN...?
AIN'T NO WAY HE'S OUT THERE.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYIN'?
RAH!
わー
HA!
わ
RAH!
HO!
うおお
...RIGHT.
THAT'S TRUE.
YEARGH!
THUD
RRRGH!
COUGH
COUGH
AH!

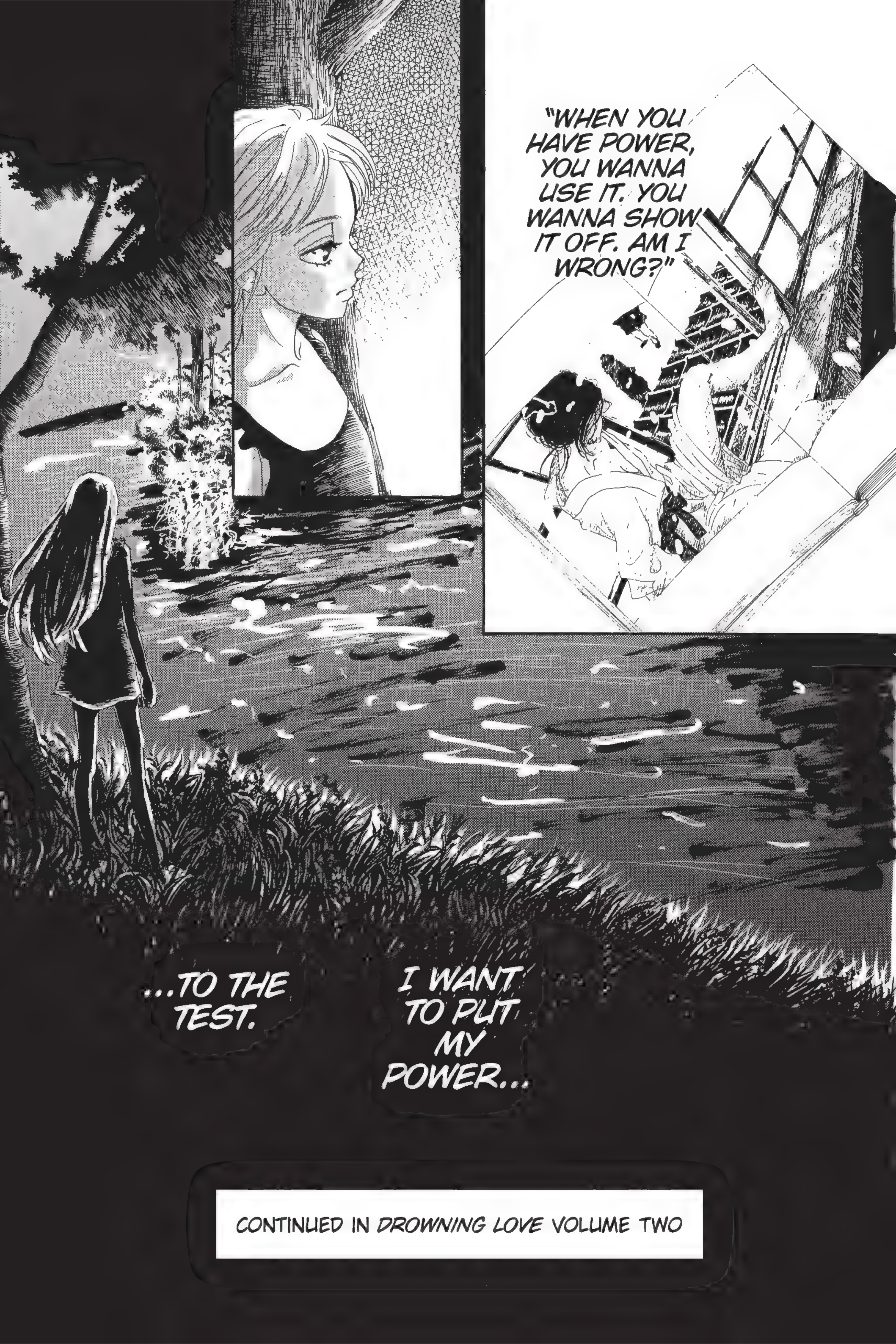

OTOMO! WHAT'RE YOU DOIN'?!
URK!
TAKE CARE OF RYUTA!
HUH?!
だっ
DASH
I KNEW IT.
THAT SENSE OF LIGHT JUST HAD TO BE...
HUH?
IT'S MOCHIZUKI!
YES! NOW HELP ME OVER THE WALL!
UM, OKAY?
トン
DONK
YOUR UNDIES'RE SHOWING!


ホオオオオオオ
FOOOOOM


THAT POWER...
THE WHIRLPOOL...
THOCK




AH! IT'S GOOD! I WANT IT!
HE'S LIKE A REAL TENGU!
WHOA!
DAMN IT! I WANT IT!
I WANT TO SWIM LIKE THAT, TOO, KICKING EVERYTHING ELSE ASIDE!
I WANT IT! I WANT IT! I WANT IT!
FOOOM


"WHEN YOU HAVE POWER, YOU WANNA USE IT. YOU WANNA SHOW IT OFF. AM I WRONG?"
I WANT TO PUT MY POWER...
...TO THE TEST.

CONTINUED IN *DROWNING LOVE* VOLUME TWO

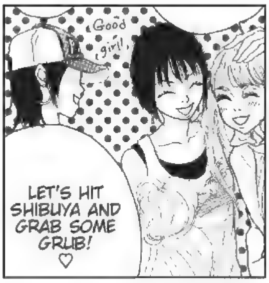
Drowning Love

DROWNING LOVE VOLUME 1
TRANSLATION NOTES

Shibuya, page 8

[8.2]

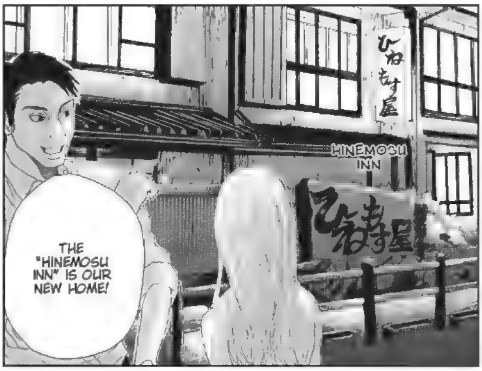
Shibuya is one of the major districts in Tokyo and is considered a trendy hangout place full of cafés, restaurants, shops, nightclubs, and other attractions.


Good girl!
LET'S HIT SHIBUYA AND GRAB SOME GRUB! ♡

Hinemosu Inn, page 10

[10.2]

Hinemosu Inn is an example of a *ryokan*, a traditional Japanese inn featuring large common areas, communal baths, and *tatami*-mat rooms with traditional Japanese amenities. Meals called *kaiseki*, a traditional Japanese cuisine that concentrates on using fresh, local ingredients, are included in the price of a room.


ひねもす屋
HINEMOSU INN
THE "HINEMOSU INN" IS OUR NEW HOME!

New Year's kimono, page 13

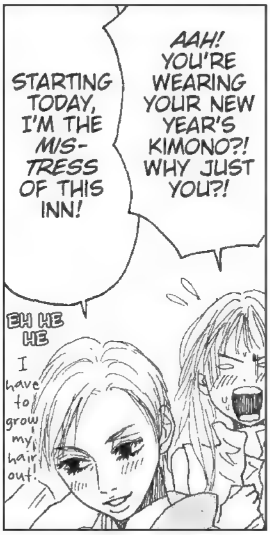
[13.2]

The New Year's celebration involves wearing very beautiful and often expensive *kimono* during the year's first visit to the shrine. These *kimono* are typically *only* worn during New Year's.

Mistress, page 13

[13.2]

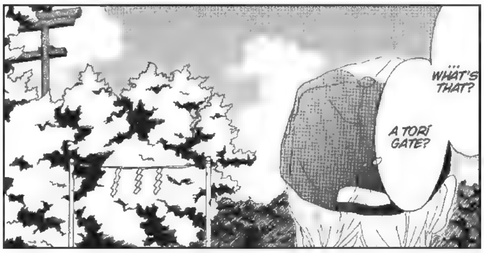
As mistress of the *ryokan*, Meiko is essentially a hostess—she's responsible for greeting and entertaining the guests, which includes conversation, music, and serving food and drink.


AAH! YOU'RE WEARING YOUR NEW YEAR'S KIMONO?! WHY JUST YOU?!
STARTING TODAY, I'M THE *MISTRESS* OF THIS INN!
EH HE HE
I have to grow my hair out!

Torī gates, page 15

[15.4]

These bright vermillion red gates indicate that the place beyond them is sacred ground. Usually they are found in front of shrines, but *torī* are also found in front of certain natural areas thought to be inhabited by gods.


...WHAT'S THAT?
A TORĪ GATE?

"all rise", "bow", page 39

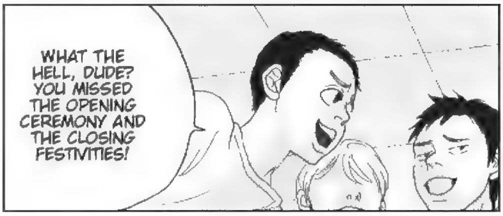
[39.6]

In Japanese schools, classes begin with a short ceremony showing respect for the teacher. The student on duty calls the other students to attention, leads them in bowing, then instructs them to sit so class can begin.

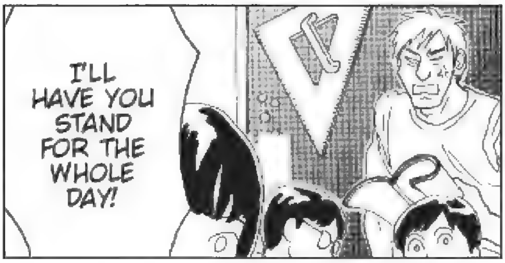
ALL RISE!
BOW!

DROWNING LOVE VOLUME 1
TRANSLATION NOTES

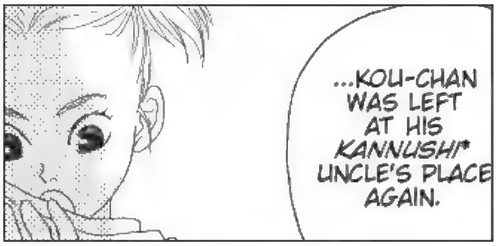
Opening ceremonies, page 42
[42.3]
As part of the first day of school, the principal, certain other teachers, and the student representatives all give speeches.


WHAT THE HELL, DUDE? YOU MISSED THE OPENING CEREMONY AND THE CLOSING FESTIVITIES!

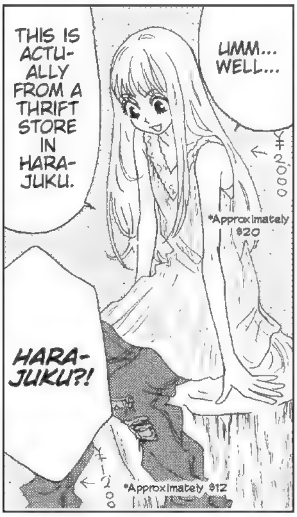
Standing as a punishment, page 70
[70.3]
One of the more common punishments in Japanese schools requires a student to stand for the entire class period, sometimes even while holding a heavy object such as a bucket of water! The standing students usually stand at the back of the classroom or in the hallway just outside the class.


I'LL HAVE YOU STAND FOR THE WHOLE DAY!

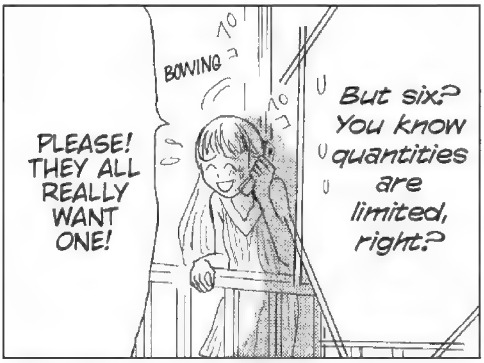
Kannushi, page 71
[71.3]
A *kannushi* is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of a shrine. It's a full-time job, including cleaning the shrine, changing the rice, water, incense, and other offerings left to the god enshrined there, and doing other tasks to serve the shrine and the community. They are often assisted in their duties by part-time priestesses called *miko.*


...KOU-CHAN WAS LEFT AT HIS KANNUSHI* UNCLE'S PLACE AGAIN.

Harajuku, page 75
[75.1]
Harajuku is a district in Tokyo mostly known for its thriving fashion culture. The district is littered with dozens of small independent clothing boutiques offering styles unique to the district. Fashion trends in Japan usually begin in Harajuku and spread from there as they are copied by clothing stores in other cities.

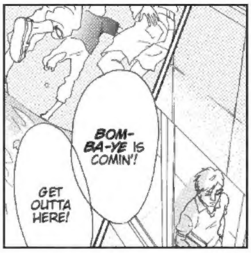

UMM... WELL...
THIS IS ACTUALLY FROM A THRIFT STORE IN HARAJUKU.
← ¥2000
*Approximately $20
HARAJUKU?!
← ¥1200
*Approximately $12

Bowing on the phone, page 76
[76.2]
Even though the editorial staff can't see her, Natsume is bowing as she makes the request. Because bowing is pretty much a reflex, it's common to do so even over the phone in the appropriate places.

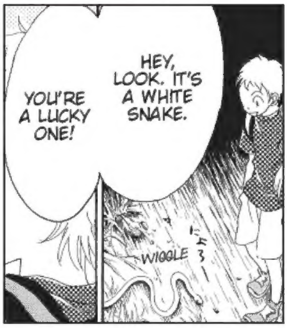

But six? You know quantities are limited, right?
BOWING
PLEASE! THEY ALL REALLY WANT ONE!

DROWNING LOVE VOLUME 1
TRANSLATION NOTES

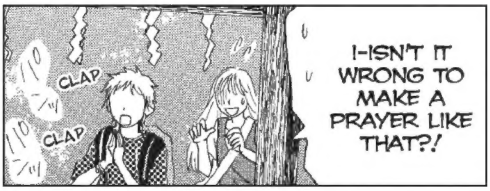
BOM-BA-YE, page 89
[89.2]
BOM-BA-YE is a professional wrestler with a very distinctive appearance. The teacher in question happens to look a lot like him.


BOM-BA-YE IS COMIN'!
GET OUTTA HERE!

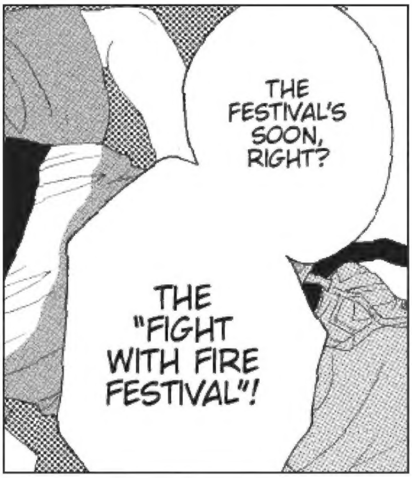
White snake, page 97
[97.1]
It's considered very lucky in Japan to encounter a white snake. White snakes are thought to be messengers and servants of Benzaiten, the goddess of love and good fortune. Sometimes businessmen even carry a picture of a white snake with them to guarantee good luck in their business affairs.


HEY, LOOK. IT'S A WHITE SNAKE.
YOU'RE A LUCKY ONE!
WIGGLE

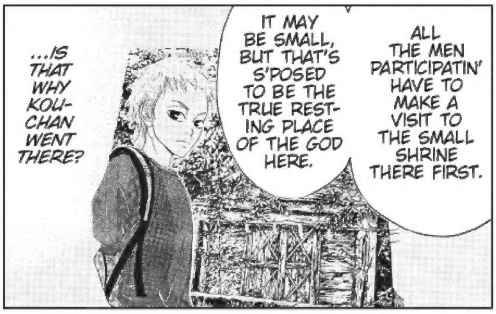
Clapping while praying, page 115
[115.3]
When praying to a god, you must first attract the god's attention. In most shrines, this involves ringing a bell, then clapping twice, after which you silently make your prayer.


I-ISN'T IT WRONG TO MAKE A PRAYER LIKE THAT?!
CLAP
CLAP

"Fight with Fire" festival, page 155
[155.3]
Many shrines in Japan have yearly festivals where the people they serve gather together to strengthen the community. The festival depicted in this chapter might seem a little extreme, but it's actually based on a real-life festival, the Nozawa Onsen Dōsojin Matsuri. Like in the comic, participants of the Dōsojin Matsuri split into two teams, one of which tries to protect a wooden structure built for the event while the other tries to burn it down with torches and flaming projectiles.

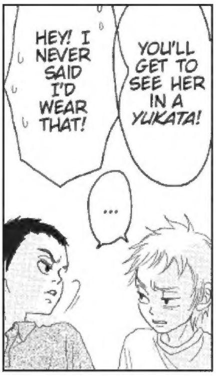

THE FESTIVAL'S SOON, RIGHT?
THE "FIGHT WITH FIRE FESTIVAL"!

True resting place, page 158
[158.4]
Gods in *shinto* inhabit objects called *shintai*, usually kept in small shrines called *honden.* A *honden* is usually surrounded by a larger shrine, but in this case the *honden* is separate from the main shrine complex.

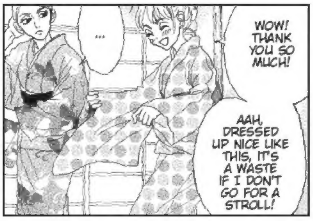

ALL THE MEN PARTICIPATIN' HAVE TO MAKE A VISIT TO THE SMALL SHRINE THERE FIRST.
IT MAY BE SMALL, BUT THAT'S S'POSED TO BE THE TRUE RESTING PLACE OF THE GOD HERE.
...IS THAT WHY KOU-CHAN WENT THERE?

DROWNING LOVE VOLUME 1
TRANSLATION NOTES

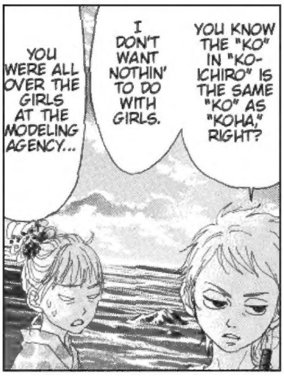
Yukata, page 159
[159.4]
A lighter version of a *kimono.* While some kinds of *yukata* are used for lounging around the house (or a *ryokan*), *yukata* with more ornate patterns and designs are worn to festivals, especially in the summer.


YOU'LL GET TO SEE HER IN A *YUKATA!*
HEY! I NEVER SAID I'D WEAR THAT!
...

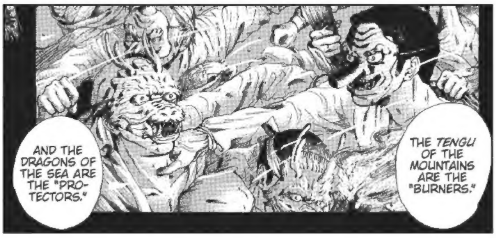
Putting on the yukata, page 165
[165.3]
Like most *kimono,* festival *yukata* require the help of another person to put on properly.


WOW! THANK YOU SO MUCH!
AAH, DRESSED UP NICE LIKE THIS, IT'S A WASTE IF I DON'T GO FOR A STROLL!
...

Kōha, page 170
[170.1]
This word not only refers to a tough, manly man, but also someone who rejects feminine things like fashion or romance.


YOU KNOW THE "KO" IN "KO-ICHIRO" IS THE SAME "KO" AS "KOHA," RIGHT?
I DON'T WANT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH GIRLS.
YOU WERE ALL OVER THE GIRLS AT THE MODELING AGENCY...

Tengu and dragons, page 177
[177.4]
Tengu are a kind of *yōkai*, or monster, that lives in the mountains. They are fierce, warlike protectors of certain mountains or forests, and can shape shift between a humanlike form and that of a bird, usually a crow. Modern depictions usually give them a red face and a comically long nose. In contrast, dragons are benevolent gods who are the source of all water. There's a dragon for every body of water that acts as its protector.


THE *TENGU* OF THE MOUNTAINS ARE THE "BURNERS."
AND THE DRAGONS OF THE SEA ARE THE "PROTECTORS."

Drowning Love 1

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

Drowning Love volume 1 copyright © 2005 George Asakuara
English translation copyright © 2017 George Asakuara

All rights reserved.

First published in Japan in 2005 by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.
Electronic Publishing rights for this English edition arranged through Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the copyright holders.

English digital edition published by Kodansha Advanced Media, LLC,
San Francisco.

www.kodanshacomics.com

ISBN: 9781682336526

Digital Edition: 1.0.0

Translatotion by Devon Corwin
Letterering by Rina Mapa
Editing by Jesika Brooks
YKS Services LLC/SKY Japan, INC.